THE SHAKERITE

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ON THE COVER

More Than Just Words, Page 52

Profile Reporter Erin Williams examines the evolution of language used by and about Black people. She asked students and adults whether they identify as African American or Black and researched words used, abandoned and advocated for over time. She then wrote a column about her effort to choose language that works for her.The cover illustration represents her story and the growing awareness and concern about Black lives in the United States.

GUEST 'RITERS

Zach Lehner

Focus on Racism, Page 74

Zach, a junior, is a CORE member, wrestler, vice president of Model United Nations and member of the Shaker Theater Program. Lehner argues the importance of keeping SGORR's focus on race relations.

Silver Barker

SGORR Must Adapt, Page 75

Silver, a senior, is a SGORR member, Raiderette, member of Mano en Mano and a part of Operation Beautiful and Global Friendship. Barker explains the importance of expanding the SGORR curriculum.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The first person I ever interviewed was my best friend; the second was my brother.

An editor quickly told me that I had disobeyed one of the most important journalistic rules.

I interviewed them because I thought, "Why would anybody else give a better answer than my brother or best friend?"

Those interviews felt safe. I didn't have to ask those sources how to spell their names — and ask them again just in case I misheard. I could joke around. I wasn't worried about being judged. It felt comfortable to talk to people I knew.

But, by October of freshman year, I had walked up to strangers in the hallway and asked all kinds of questions. Wow, did their answers open my eyes.

Last year, I contacted community members and asked them what they would think if the high school created an all-gender restroom. I was gobsmacked by some of their responses. I had always believed that nobody could truly think that adding an all-gender restroom would be an invitation to sexual assault.

Oh boy, was I wrong.

By asking questions, I found out how much bigger your life gets when you make yourself smaller in it. Our lives are as big as everything we're aware of; what we don't know doesn't exist to us.

As I embraced this new role of journalist, I felt justified when asking questions because it was my job. I had permission to ask people about what it's like being a man, being Black, being transgender, because I could just say it was for a story. But really, I was curious.

It's been three years since I interviewed my best friend and my brother, and I realize now that the breadth of your questions will determine the breadth of the answers. If you want to find someone's criminal record, you can ask. If you want to know why the high school's restrooms are locked at a certain time, you can ask. If you are curious about the rudest thing a student has said to a teacher, you can ask.

I realized that if you want any sort of personalization in your education, you have to ask.

For this issue, we asked. We asked about the lack of diversity within school faculty and athletics. We asked what growing up Black feels like. We asked what it's like to own a successful slime company as a freshman. We asked whether students prefer to be called Black or African-American. We asked what it's like hearing derogatory terms out in the world after leaving the Shaker bubble.

We asked. And we hope that you will read what we learned.

Mae Nagusky
Editor-in-Chief

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"A CLOSED MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING TO LOSE"
Question Assumptions
In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.

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OUTSIDE OF SHAKER, DIVERSITY OF ANOTHER KIND

Alona Miller

Joining new environments, alumni can experience culture shock

Danielle Krantz *Campus and City Editor*

All high school graduates can be surprised by what greets them when they enter college.

"Shaker is a bubble. Once you get outside of Shaker, it's a whole different world, different game, especially if you go to a different region of the United States," saidKameron Willis ('17), a junior at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

Madi Hart ('18), a sophomore attending The Ohio State University, said she was surprised when she arrived there and realized that people around her were not as liberal as Shaker Heights residents.

"I guess I was used to saying things and people being like, 'Oh yeah,' and that wasn't the case anymore. So, I was more careful with what came out of my mouth because I had to make sure I was in the right crowd of people," she said.

Junior David Spielman takes classes at Cuyahoga Community College via College Credit Plus — a program offered throughout Ohio that allows students to take free or low-cost classes at local colleges for high school and college credit. He said that there is more political diversity in his college courses and that people are comfortable writing and talking

about their conservative views.

Spielman said a student in his class wrote an essay arguing that transgender athletes should have to compete against others of their birth sex. At Tri-C, Spielman said, students feel more comfortable writing about whatever they want to.

For example, he said that at Shaker, he would be chastised if he argued the same opinion -- that a transgender female athelte who was born biologically male should not compete against other female atheletes. "If I were to write something like that here, I would feel that maybe people would take it as, 'Oh, you're transphobic' or get offended about it," Spielman said.

Liberalism prevails in Shaker. According to a 2016 Shakerite survey of 240 students, 68 percent held a negative or very negative view of the Republican Party, and 2.9 percent held a "very positive" view.

However, outside of Shaker Heights, Ohio is far more balanced, politically and socially. According to a 2014 Pew Research Center study, 42 percent of Ohio citizens lean toward or affiliate with the Republican Party, 18 percent have no affiliation, and 40 percent lean toward or identify with the Democratic Party.

Spielman said he isn't exposed to different political opinions in Shaker. "In terms of politics, there are other viewpoints," he said. "I don't really feel like I hear everything that people believe in the country."

Todd Torrence, who teaches government at the high school, tries to help students like Spielman experience more diverse political thought.

"We try to make everyone comfortable in there, no matter what their beliefs are politically," Torrence said. "I know other teachers have had some students who felt they were under attack since they held the Republican or the more conservative view about things."

Torrence said he tries to make students aware that not every belief of the party they identify with may align with their own views.

Adonis Fryer ('19), a freshman at Ohio University, said he is more receptive to all people now that he has left Shaker. "With Shaker, you get to meet a lot of people -- a lot of different people -- just from your high school. I think it gives you a good sense of diversity, but I also think that it lacks in some regards with diversity. Like, in terms of political beliefs and in terms of small town geographic and big city geographic experiences," he said.

Shaker graduates also notice differences in the way people speak about marginalized groups.

Hart, who is white, said she has heard OSU students make comments that contradict Shaker norms. For example, she said she has heard students say the n-word and use the slur, "retarded." A friend also said that he thought impoverished people should just get jobs, and that he could not understand why they could not help themselves.

Jalan Morgan ('18), who is Black and a freshman at the Uni-

"I don't really feel like I hear everything that people believe in the country."

David Spielman
junior

versity of Cincinnati, stated in an email that he hears white people say racial slurs at college. "An instance that caught me off guard because you didn't hear it in Shaker -- was hearing a non-person of color say the n-word," he said.

"It's weird because I knew other people said it," said Morgan, "but for someone to say it in front of me and think nothing of it -- think it wasn't a problem or think it's a new slang term -- took me by complete surprise."

Drew Hubbard ('18), a white sophomore at Miami University, said she admonished a white student who was saying the n-word casually to one of his friends. "Miami has a kind of stigma around it. Yes, it's kind of conservative. It's a lot of rich, white people," she said.

According to Forbes Magazine, in the 2017-18 school year, the Miami student body was 72 percent white and 3.2 percent Black. The remaining 24.8 percent included multiracial, Asian and Latino students.

Isabel Ortman ('19), a Latina freshman at Tri-C, lives in Kent and was surprised by its racial homogeneity. "When I moved out here, it was a little bit of a culture shock, just because it's more of a white community," she said. "There were a few instances where I went to the store or something, and I feel like I would get weird looks from people. Whether it was just me being a little bit paranoid, or people could tell my race, I don't know."

The student body at Morehouse, where Willis attends, is 94.4 percent Black. But Willis lives off campus in Atlanta and said the racial climate there is tenser than in Shaker Heights.

"Sometimes down South, it's a little bit more hostile. I think Shaker is very diverse and has a very good community. No matter what race you are, everyone's pretty nice, and everyone gets along pretty well. But then down South here, it's a little more divided, and a lot of people are racist or just prejudiced in any type of way," he said.

2013 Morehouse College graduates celebrate President Barack Obama's commencement. **Photo by Pete Souza.**

Willis said that members of the Ku Klux Klan protested during a gubernatorial campaign rally at Morehouse. The candidate was Stacey Abrams, a Black woman, who ran for Georgia governor in 2018. Willis said he was shocked to hear people chanting, "white power" first-hand.

SHHS graduates are aware of the racial disparities on their campuses. UC is 72.9 percent white and 7.6 percent Black. The remaining 19.5 percent of students include multiracial, Asian and Latino students. Morgan said Shaker did not prepare him for the absence of diversity at Cincinnati.

"I knew it was a predominantly white institution," he said. But there are so few Black people on campus, he said, "that I can count them on my hands. I feel that that is one thing Shaker didn't prepare me for -- not even being one of the few Black kids in AP and honors courses."

Although Willis attends an HBCU and is not in the minority in his classes, he is often the minority in public spaces. But Willis said that he is used to being the only Black person in a room because of his experiences in Shaker's advanced classes. "I feel like it prepared me academically, and also it prepared me to be able to deal with being in spaces that are majority white, since I was in the IB curriculum and in all of my IB classes, I would either be the only

one or one of two or three Black students in those classes.

"And although that's not good, I was able to learn how to deal with being in that space," Willis said.

Torrence said that Shaker tries to prepare students as much as possible by having honest conversations through groups like the Student Group on Race Relations. "I think overall we try to make sure the kids are offered a balanced view of what's happening, as much as possible," he said.

Kay Petrovic ('18), a sophomore attending Kent State University, said Shaker made her much more open minded. "Before I lived in Shaker, I was from Connecticut, so I went to a school where it was really only white people. And then when I moved to Shaker, I was abl;e to see different people from all different aspects, like race and religion and stuff like that," she said.

"Without that in college, I don't know if I would have necessarily surrounded myself with people who are different from me."

However, Morgan said his Shaker experience did not equip him for what was to come. "I don't feel Shaker prepared me for the real world in a single way, because they always swept things under the rug or shielded us away from anything dangerous or harmful," he said. "But they did prepare me for the workload, and how to delegate my time to homework."

However, Hart said that in joining a more politically diverse community, her identity has been newly shaped. "My time at Ohio State has made me more open minded in regards to people who are different than me politically. So, when I went into college as a progressive person, I was very closed-minded and had a hard time seeing the other side of [things] people believed," she said.

Hart said in terms of reproductive rights, she never got a chance to hear the reasoning behind taking a pro-life stance at Shaker. She said now she can ask people for their reasons and have an open conversation -- one that is not accusatory -- with them.

"Now that I've had the chance to actually talk and interact with a lot of conservative people, I'm more open-minded," Hart said. "People are products of their environments, and where they come from dictates the fears and beliefs that they have."

The Ohio State University is 69.1 percent white and 5.9 percent Black. The remaining 25 percent of students include multiracial, Asian and Latino students. **Photo by Mollie Davis.**

The district employs more Black teachers than the national average, but faculty don't reflect student diversity

Picture this: A white teacher instructing a class of majority Black students.

This is not an unusual sight in the district, which comprises nearly 50 percent Black students. However, this image becomes especially poignant when it represents African American History classes at the high school.

The district's student body reflects a minority majority: 45 percent Black, 41 percent white, 5 percent multiracial, 3 percent Native American/Alaskan, 3 percent Latino and 3 percent Asian. And its teaching staff is 80 percent white, 14.4 percent black, 3 percent Asian and less than 1 percent Native American/Alaskan or non-specified. Although the district employs more than double the amount of Black teachers as the 7 percent national average, that number falls far short of reflecting the diversity of the student body.

The lack of faculty diversity is not an issue unique to Shaker. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, during the 2015-16 school year, 80 percent of U.S. public school teachers were white. Nine percent were Latino, 7 percent were

Staff gather for a photo at Russell H. Rupp Stadium Aug. 15, 2019 during all-staff convocation activities. The image shows a clear white majority. **Photo by Shaker Heights Schools.**

MORGAN FOWLER *CAMPUS AND CITY FALCULTY REPORTER*

black, 2 percent were Asian, 1 percent were multiracial and less than 1 percent were Native American/Alaskan. Senior Kennedy Fletcher said she has not had any black teachers throughout high school. "It's really easy to notice when people don't look like you, and you take all this instruction from them," she said.

The lack of diversity among both students and teachers in honors and Advanced Placement classes is also discouraging, Fletcher said. "What do I do? Who do I go to for guidance? Especially because I know the journey is going to be different for me than it was for somebody who doesn't look like me," she said.

Sophomore Journee Byrd-Allen said she shares a similar experience. "It kind of makes me feel like an outlier because I take advanced courses and honors courses, and there's not many Black teachers there," she said. "So it's not like I can really get comfortable or maybe go to somebody that would understand me more as a Black student." According to a Shakerite analysis of the high school teacher matrix, no Black teachers at the high school teach AP or International Baccalaureate Diploma Pro-

gramme classes in any department. This absence is not unique to AP and IB classes; only 11 percent of the district's high school teachers are Black, while 85 percent are white. Three percent are Asian and 1 percent are Latino.

Math teacher Angela Harrell wrote in an email that each year teachers are asked which classes they prefer to instruct, and she has never witnessed a Black teacher denied when asking to teach AP or IB classes. Harrell said she cannot speak for all Black teachers, but explained that she teaches Algebra 1 Honors to encourage all her students, but her Black students in particular, to pursue higher level classes.

"So many students come into my class believing they are not good at math," she wrote. "It is a mission of mine every year to change the student's mindset; I want them to leave me at the end of the year knowing they can be successful in math."

"A CLOSED MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING TO LOSE"
Question Assumptions
In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.
—George Orwell
IF YOU'RE NOT OUTRAGED YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION
LOVE TRUMPS HATE

Social studies teacher Jessica O'Brien teaches African American History Jan. 27, 2020. O'Brien is one of two white faculty members who teach the class this year. The class pictured here includes only one white student. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Last spring, SHHS graduate Jeremiah Caver ('19) told The Shakerite that teachers had spoken to him in a "simple-minded" way. "They talk to you like you won't understand the way they talk to the rest of the class," he said then, adding that he noticed teachers quickly relating information to his white friends but explaining it slowly to him, as if he wouldn't be able to understand it otherwise.

Byrd-Allen said she felt discouraged when a teacher used this same style when speaking with her last year. "I am in the same class [as the white students] and I understand the same material as them, so I kind of feel judged there," she said. For this reason, Byrd-Allen considered dropping the class. "I didn't know if I could really handle the struggle of being judged and being the only black girl in there," she said.

Harrell said teachers need to be taught how to make students feel like they belong in their class. "Conversations need to be had with teachers saying what they can do to make students more comfortable," she said. It is also important to encourage students to take a class even if they're the only minority student, Harrell explained. "Talk to students and tell them that they belong and shouldn't think they don't belong just because there aren't other students that look like them," she said.

African American history teacher Victoria Berndt, who is white, said she invites her students to discuss if it is inappropriate to have a white teacher teach African American history. "The overwhelming synopsis is that as long as the kids are being taught the history openly and honestly, they feel as though they can still get a good education from it; that it shouldn't necessarily be based on race," she

said. Berndt said she addresses this topic because she lacks the perspective and experiences of a Black person. "Although I've had teachers who are African American in my bachelor's program, I am still lacking a big perspective, and that's not something that I pretend to even have," she said.

Berndt also encourages her students to share personal experiences that she will not share outside the classroom without permission. "That's how I try to make up for not having that background and that perspective," she said.

There should be more Black history teachers in the district, especially for African American history classes, junior Shatara Dowdell said. "If it was taught by an African American person, I think it would've been different, like telling more stories about their lives," she said. "I think I could've learned more about my background because I'm African American."

One student who requested anonymity to protect the identity of their teacher, said they felt uncomfortable as the only Black student in a class when others looked at them with pity while discussing segregation and integration. The class was taught by a white teacher. "I think if my teacher was Black, [they] probably would've come up to me and actually checked on me to see how I was doing in the class or come up to me after school and ask if I'm OK during this subject," the student said.

The disconnect between students and teachers of different cultures can result in microaggressions that discourage students from excelling in school, senior Adaeze Okoye said. She defined microaggressions as "intentional or unintentional insults, prejudice or derogatory terms."

Microaggressions can lurk in compliments, Caver told the Shakerite last spring. When people offer praise by saying, "You're so articulate," the statement implies that the person who made that comment doesn't expect him to be.

Senior Aaliyah Williams said some teachers or coaches speak to her in a "fake blaccent."

"One time I was talking to a coach and [they] were like, 'Hey, girl, wassup.' It was a mix between southern and — I can't even describe it," she said. "It's really weird because you know that's not how they talk."

Williams also said teachers sometimes comment on how often she changes her hair style. " It feels like they're treating me as if I'm something to be marvelled at, rather than just a human being," she said. "Something about it just always feels so dehumanizing when they're acting like my hair is not a part of me, like it's not an extension of myself."

Williams said some teachers also try to abbreviate her name. "They ask me if they can call me anything but my name. One teacher wanted to call me Liyah, one teacher wanted to just call me Lee," she said. "It just feels as if they're trying to separate me from my Black girl identity, and that's just not something that I would ever want."

Math teacher Jayce Bailey said being one of few black teachers creates pressure to become a spokesperson for all black people. "Sometimes it feels like you're the go-to person. If there's anything concerning Black cultural issues, people may ask you like you're the only voice, and it's hard to be one person to represent an entire culture. That's not fair at all," Bailey said. "While my view may be shared by some in the black community, it can also be very different compared to other Black people," he wrote in an email. "What I am trying to say is that, while I will give my stance on a topic, you cannot assume that my one stance represents the entire community."

However, Bailey said it's important for him to represent Black males positively. "I think that letting kids see that Black males can be leaders can help shape them going into adulthood. They won't

just be blind and listen to what the media is displaying because sometimes the news doesn't show a lot of successes. It just shows negative things," he said.

It is important for all students to have a diverse teaching staff, junior MAC Scholar Rudy Collins said. "I just think that it's good to see -- after the history of African Americans -- their success and how they've come to be a part of the world and a part of the nation today," he said.

"He's Black, he did that. I'm Black, I can do that, too."

Dalton Mosely
junior

The district needs a teaching staff that better reflects its student body, social studies teacher Brian Berger said. "I also think it could be inspiring for people of color to see teachers of color and to realize they themselves can be teachers," he said. "I think it's really good to see yourself in possible jobs and positions."

Bailey's story echoes this idea; he said he engaged with lots of black teachers, principals and coaches when he was growing up. "I had some great teachers in high school, so I wanted to give back, so that's why I went into teaching," he said.

Collins said he was influenced to pursue engineering by MAC Scholar alumni who returned to talk about their careers. "It helped me a lot because there were a lot of people who came in from the field of engineering, which is now why I'm taking engineering," he said. "Being able to see their success throughout their college career and now their working career gives me that mentality that I could do that as well." Collins said that no scholars who went on to become teachers have addressed the group. Founding adviser Hubert McIntyre wrote in an email that current scholars decide who will be invited to speak.

A study conducted in France during the 2015-2016 school year tested whether exposure to female scientists could influence high school girls' view and pursuit of science professions. The scientists spoke to students about science-related careers and the lack of women in the field. "The program increased the probability of enrolling in a STEM undergraduate program in 2016/17 by 2.4 percentage points, which corresponds to an 8.3 percent increase from the baseline of 28.9 percent," the study states. Female students involved in the program were 10 percent more likely to enroll in selective STEM programs.

Would Black teacher guest speakers help influence Black students to become teachers?

Junior MAC Scholars Dalton Mosely and Evan Ward said they think so. Having Black teachers speak to the scholars may cause them to think, "He's Black, he did that. I'm black, I can do that, too," Mosely said. Ward said that it is beneficial to hear from alumni in any profession who have also gone through the scholars program. "When someone comes to talk to you that went through the same process as you, it shows [scholars] that they can do the same thing," he said.

"I feel like young students seeing people that look like us would help them think that they can also aspire to be like that," Mosely said.

Shaker alumna Angela Chapman ('81) attended North Carolina A&T State University, one of 107 historically black colleges and universities in the United States. HBCUs were founded in the early 1800s to ensure that all students had access to higher education. Chapman said the A&T was different from any other school she attended; most of her teachers were Black. "My professors and adviser cared for me like family, and they were very concerned about my success, and about my well-being in general, not just academics," she said.

Chapman said one of her professors visited her while she attended law school at Florida A&M University, another HBCU, to check on her and regularly kept in touch. One of her law professors also donated money to her family during a personal emergency in her second year of law school. "It was such a blessing, especially at such a crucial, highly stressful time," she wrote in a text message. "That kind of support got me through undergrad and law school, and I will be forever grateful."

Ayesha Bell Hardaway, vice president of the Board of Education and parent of Shaker students, said that having Black teachers was encouraging. She describes one of her Black law professors at Case Western Reserve University as "an amazing educator, very interested and engaged in my trajectory for success.

"I remember him saying to my kids at graduation that I could be whatever I wanted to be," she said. Hardaway said she did not have this level of connection with her other law professors.

Hardaway is now a law professor at her alma mater. "I decided to teach at the law school to ensure that historically marginalized students would have the opportunity to work with a professor from a similar demographic," she wrote in an email. Last year, she said, the majority of her law students were Black.

"I have heard from my Black students that they appreciate my teaching style and they appreciate my commitment to holding them accountable, setting high expectations and helping them figure out how to meet those expectations through our time together in the course," she said.

Despite attending Shaker schools since kindergarten, Fletcher has had Black teachers in third and eighth grade only. "Being in third grade and seeing someone who looked like me, teach me, really did help," she said. It's encouraging to have a same-race teacher because "representation is important," Fletcher said. She also believes that the lack of diversity in teaching staff may deter minority students from becoming teachers.

Chapman said the lack of minority teachers sends the message to minority students that qualified teachers don't look like them. "It may cause one to feel that they can't teach others as an adult," she said. "That, in itself, is problematic because that stretches beyond the classroom."

MAC Scholars Dalton Mosely and Rudy Collins discuss how a teacher's race affects students. "One of the main things that would be able to motivate aspiring black students would be that there are people that look like us," Mosely said. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Mosely said, "One of the main things that would be able to motivate aspiring black students, would be that there are people that look like us."

Diverse instructors are important to all students, according to Shaker parent Lisa Vahey. "Sometimes, as white parents, we feel like we don't have to think about it because it doesn't matter. My kids have had teachers who look like them. But, as a parent who cares about equity, I actually care about my kids having teachers that don't look like them," Vahey said. "I am a stronger human being because of my relationships with the Black women I've met in Shaker who've helped me think about things from their perspective and not only my perspective."

Vahey said these friendships have changed who she follows on Instagram, the way she acts in meetings, what she pays attention to in the hallways of the school and more. "The value of a diverse workforce, a diverse friendship group, a diverse curriculum, I believe makes us stronger," she said. Diversity builds a community "that is kinder and restorative and understanding, a community that has mutual respect for differences and really cares for and about each other," she said.

Mosely said a diverse teaching staff would benefit all students, no matter their race by "helping you be more racially exposed and helping you understand new people and their perspectives and their world views," he said, "therefore making you a more well-rounded and more experienced person."

In addition to the benefits of career role models and heightened awareness and understanding enabled by diverse faculty, there is evidence that Black students perform better academically in the long run when they learn from a same-race teacher early in their school careers. Seth Gershenson, an associate professor in the Department of Public Administration and Policy at American University, studied the long-term effects on Black students who have a Black teacher in elementary school. The study examined factors such as college enrollment rates, high school graduation and drop-out rates to determine the impacts.

According to the study, having at least one Black teacher in third through fifth grade reduced the Black student high school dropout rate by approximately 31 percent. The study also showed a 12.4 percent increase in low-income Black students' plans to attend college, according to high school survey results, and a 10 percent higher probability of taking a college entrance exam such as the SAT or ACT for all Black students.

Gershenson said the first same-race teacher a student has creates the greatest impact. "Even having one Black teacher seemed to really increase the Black students' outcomes," he said in a phone interview.

The main result of the study is that a same-race teacher, even early in elementary school, has an evident effect 20 years later on whether or not Black students enroll in college, which shows the importance of student exposure to teachers of the same race.

According to the district, Erica Merritt was hired in August as the district's Interim Equity Partner to "lay groundwork for a diversity recruitment and retention plan to help ensure the district has diverse and well-qualified candidates for future vacancies." In the meantime, Merritt has led group discussions open to community members such as "Let's Get REAL About Race," "Interrupting Racism" and "How to Be an Anti-Racist."

Later, after consulting Superintendent David Glasner, Merritt's focus shifted to educating dis-

Equity Partner Erica Merritt is helping the district achieve a more diverse staff. "It's important that the people who are in positions of leading the faculty and leading the district have knowledge," she said. **Photo by Kim Taylor.**

trict administrators. "When I started to talk to Glasner about doing some more intense work, one of the things we talked about was really concentrating on people who are working in the district. Not that working with the community hadn't been important, but because the focus had been so outward," she said. "We really wanted to make sure the folks who were working in the district had experienced the same content and had the same baseline of knowledge."

The internal cohort, Leading Equity, evaluates the history of racism in the United States and how it may affect education. They also discuss intervention for race-related issues on "an internalized, interpersonal, institutional and a structural level," Merritt said. "I think that it's focused on leadership because it starts at the top. It's important that the people who are in positions of leading the faculty and leading the district have knowledge, and I'm not saying that teachers don't also need it, but it really has just been a matter of starting at the top." She said Leading Equity was limited to principals, administrators, teachers in union leadership positions, IB Coordinators, CSI cohort members and teachers with roles beyond their classrooms.

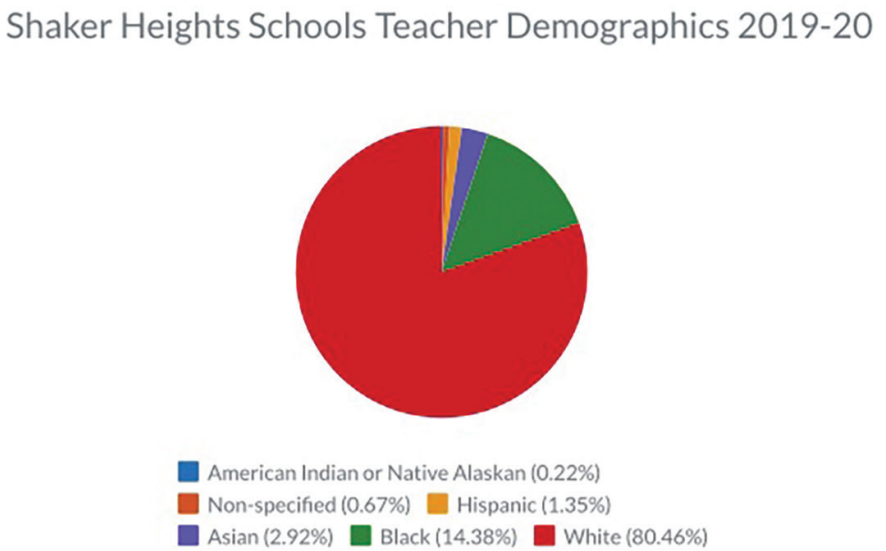
Harrell said diversity and equity training can help change a teacher's subconscious actions. "Most of the teachers I have as colleagues have their heart in the right place, so they may do something unintentionally," she said. Training "makes you become aware of the things you're not aware of."

According to Chapman, it is difficult for any teacher to share a cultural understanding with a student of a different race without intentional diversity training. "It's not anything against white teachers. It's just that the teachers of color and the white teachers have simply lived in different worlds and really can't be expected, without intentional training, to have that understanding," she said.

> "The teachers of color and the white teachers have simply lived in different worlds and really can't be expected, without intentional training, to have that understanding,"
>
> Erica Merrit
> *Equity Partner*

Merritt said equity training for teachers is only part of the solution. "I do a lot of training, and I think that it has value, but I think that it also has to be supported by other things, so that's where the policy and practice pieces become really important," she said. "I think what we need to do is figure out ways to both help educators to interrupt habits that are leading to negative results and increase habits that are going to lead to positive results." Merritt said that the district's Equity Policy and Strategic Plan would reinforce training.

Bailey said low wages are one reason Black students are not becoming teachers. "Coming from a place where we didn't always have a lot, and I was going to college, it



Data provided by Chris Rateno, director of student data systems and accountability.

was always, 'Hey, why don't you pick something for the money?' And I know other people that did," he said. "They picked jobs because they wanted to make a lot of money."

Chapman also identified low salaries as a deterrent to becoming a teacher. "People that ordinarily would want to teach, that would have a passion for teaching, shy away from teaching because teachers, historically, don't make any money," she said. Chapman believes that teachers need to be paid more, but said there are other ways to attract minority candidates. The district should "get some of these graduate students fresh off of a master's program, offer incentives to help pay their student loans, and get them to contract for three to five years," she said.

In Illinois, a Teacher's Loan Repayment Program awards up to $5,000 to students who choose to teach in low-income schools. This federal government also offers loan forgiveness programs for teachers who work in such schools, although there is increasing evidence that the government is not honoring it.

Dowdell said if the district were to help pay her student loans, she would consider returning to Shaker to teach. "If I see that they're actually helping me with college, not just saying they will, then yes," Dowdell said.

Williams said she considered becoming a teacher until she realized what teachers earn. According to the National Education Association, in the 2017-2018 school year, the average starting salary for a public school teacher in Ohio was $35,923, and the national average was $39,249.

"Being a teacher seems like it can be so grueling and so horrible because you're being underpaid for working crazy hours and doing all this emotional labor for these students," Williams said. "But if Shaker offered to pay off my student loans, I think that that would take such a burden off of me."

"I think that going to college then coming back and helping to raise other people into the person that they're meant to be -- I would actually love to do that," said Williams, who added that earning lots of money to be considered successful is ingrained in American culture, and she, too, has been affected by that norm.

The starting salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree in Shaker is $48,075, almost $9,000 more than the national average. Shaker teachers who work five years with no further education earn $57,690.

By comparison, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, an accountant earns an average annual wage of $79,520, an engineer earns $88,800, a registered nurse earns $77,460, a social worker earns $50,410, a journalist earns $62,400, and secondary teachers earn $65,850.

Glasner said the district may be able to help pay off student loans in the future, but he is not sure. "There would be a lot of planning and discussions that would have to take place in order to offer that," he said. "We do currently offer tuition support when teachers and other faculty are already employed by Shaker and going back to get an additional degree, or going back to school

for other reasons."

Glasner said the district has been working on other ways to diversify its staff. "Our goal is to make sure that we have a diverse representation of teachers and other staff from all different backgrounds, experiences and racial groups because we know that is what helps all students succeed," he said.

Shaker is a member of the Cleveland Area Minority Recruitment Association. According to its website, CAMERA's purpose is to "develop coordinated recruitment and retention of qualified minority educators that will enable member agencies to diversify their faculty more effectively." High school Assistant Principal Tiffany Joseph, recently named Woodbury principal, attended CAMERA's job fair with the Canton City School District last year and planned to attend with Shaker this spring.

"A part of it is not only to network for positions, but it's also to provide minority candidates with an opportunity to talk to people who might not necessarily work in administration or [human resources] to find out hiring tips, what's appropriate and what's not appropriate to do in an upcoming interview," Joseph said.

However, the job fair scheduled for April 21 was canceled due to the shelter-in-place order issued by Gov. Mike DeWine March 23.

Joseph did attend the Feb. 22 Northeast Ohio Diversity in Education Recruitment Event. The group, whose events aim to help districts hire teachers who reflect student diversity, focuses on the impact that adults have on a community when they share similar experiences with students in terms of race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and religion.

The district was unable to attend the Northeast Ohio Teacher Education Day April 7, due to DeWine's order. NOTED is an opportunity for teacher candidates to meet hiring officials from districts in Ohio.

"Not only were we trying to be more visible at events of such nature, but we [were] also thinking about the people that we bring to these events, not just administration, but teachers who actually service the kids because we want to get multiple opinions about the candidates that we bring into the district," Joseph said. "So I definitely think that it is the start of something great in terms of improving diversity in our district and impacting it positively."

According to Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations Scott Stephens, the district will attend virtual job fairs through Diversity in Education when positions become vacant. "We are also looking at internal candidates in order to encourage upward mobility and morale within the district," he wrote in an email. The district also informed partnering colleges of their "intent to draw a more diverse student-teaching pool," Stephens wrote.

Interim Director of Human Resources Crystal Patrick said these colleges include, but are not limited to, Kent State University, John Carroll University, Walsh University, Cleveland State University, Akron University, Baldwin Wallace University, Ursuline College and Notre Dame College.

Earlier this year, Glasner started a Black Teacher Task Force that "centers on recruitment and retention of black teachers, and is open to black teachers and black paraprofessionals," he said. "I think they will have a lot of good input and feedback based on their experiences, to help us do a better job of recruiting with diversity and equity in mind."

According to Merritt, the group first met March 3 and will continue to meet virtually. According to Stephens, Merritt is also working with Human Resources to explore ways the task force can be involved in the hiring process this spring. In June, she moderated online candidate forums for the two finalists for a new district's new executive director of diversity, equity and inclusion position.

Concerns about the number of Black teachers in public schools are not new, and it's unknown how much the lack of diversity within the teaching ranks will affect students while school is disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Collins said, "If you're going through something that a lot of African American families go through often, and your teacher knows about it and they have lived through it as well, it allows them to be put into your shoes and see what you're going through."

FIT TO FIGHT, OR NOT QUITE

Athletic uniforms reflect the many ways Raiders play

Caroline Brancato *Investigations Editor*

Throughout the school day, Shaker students dress in a variety of styles, reflecting differences in students' interests, hobbies, classes and extracurricular activities. But on fields,courts and trails, individuality gives way to red and white uniformity.

Uniforms are an easy way to recognize a sports team, from the colors and logos to the clothing designs and brands. Youth, club, middle school and high school sports teams all take pride in the uniforms they wear, especially new ones. But where does the process of purchasing uniforms for the high school start?

For Shaker, Athletic Director Don Readance oversees the process of selecting, ordering and replacing high school uniforms and works with coaches, vendors and administrators to do so.

The district pays for uniforms with athletic budget funds. According to treasurer Bryan Christman, the high school Athletic Department spent $617,148 on coaches salaries, wages and benefits, and $448,578 on all other expenses such as uniforms, transportation and field equipment for a total of $1,065,727 during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

The Athletic Department is not given a set amount to spend on uniforms annually, so uniforms are replaced every three to five

Josh Floyd wears the hockey team's white uniform, one of their three sets, when playing University School. **Photo by David Vahey.**

years based on their condition, which varies depending on the sport. The Athletic Department avoids purchasing new uniforms if the current ones are in suitable condition.

The budget is not divided equally by sport; uniforms are bought based on the need of each team. For example, track and cross country runners only need one uniform, while soccer players need home and away uniforms in specific colors, in order to distinguish them from their opponents.

Readance said current football uniforms have lasted longer than they have in the past, because most games are played on turf, and jerseys don't wear out as quickly as they did when the high school field was grass. The current football jerseys have been worn for seven seasons.

However, Head Hockey Coach Matt Bartley said hockey uniforms usually only last up to three years. "Sometimes, by that third year, it's a little dicey. We play 35, 40 games a year, and hockey is a contact sport, so they get worn pretty easily," he said.

Softball Head Coach Emily Rucker has coached for five years and said that softball uniforms have not been replaced during her tenure until this season, but they were in great condition.

At the end of each season, players return their uniforms, which are washed and reconditioned to ready them for the next.

> "We want to be able to put teams out there and feel good about what they're wearing. We're not trying to get the most expensive just because that's what other teams are wearing."
>
> Don Readance
> *Athletic Director*

Readance said when the Athletic Department and coaches buy uniforms, they look for quality materials and affordable prices as well as style. "We want to be able to put teams out there and feel good about what they're wearing. We're not trying to get the most expensive just because that's what other teams are wearing," he said.

Readance said that the Athletic Department buys uniforms from around eight to 10 vendors. Each coach is in charge of their team's uniform purchases and chooses the brand, fit and design of their team's uniforms. Bartley said he uses three different vendors to buy equipment and uniforms for the hockey team. "For all our equipment, whether it's paid for by the school or externally, we try to use different vendors to try to get the cheapest price we can," he said.

Bartley said he also tries to support local vendors such as Rube Adler Sporting Goods, based in Solon, which supplies the hockey team's spirit wear. Shaker has used this vendor in the past to purchase baseball and lacrosse uniforms.

For hockey, the school pays for a red set and a white set of jerseys and shell covers — which are worn over hockey pants so all players can wear the same color without having to buy a second pair. The school also supplies socks every year for the team. Bartley estimates that players spend $2,000 on their own for their equipment, which includes

skates, sticks and pads.

In addition to the red and white sets, the hockey team has a third black set of uniforms, which were donated to the school by an anonymous parent in 2015. Bartley said that the team wears the black set three to four times a season to extend the life of the red and white uniforms.

"I don't think [donations] happen a lot but if somebody is willing to do that, we just need them to step forward and put something in writing for us and let us know in advance," said Readance.

Assistant women's basketball coach Micah Parker said that the current coaching staff had no say in the team's uniforms, since this is their first year coaching, but that he would like to get a third, black jersey to serve as an alternate uniform. Women's basketball uniforms are paid for by the district and manufactured by Wilson — a sports equipment company based in Chicago.

Most other team sports such as basketball, softball and soccer have two uniforms — one for home games, when teams wear white, and one for away games, when teams wear color.

In individual sports like tennis and golf, players purchase and keep their own uniforms.

Senior basketball player Adaeze Okoye said she wishes their jerseys were smaller and fit better, similar to the men's basketball uniforms. "Other schools with the same type of uniforms as us, they're fitted way better than ours, so I wish I had their uniforms, and I wish I had the boys' uniforms all the time," she said.

> "We have smaller-sized girls on the team, and it's not fair for them to wear super big uniforms."
>
> Cecilia Zagara
> *senior*

Senior basketball player Cecilia Zagara also said the uniforms don't fit well. "They're very large," she said. "They ordered a majority of larger sizes rather than smaller sizes, which is kind of frustrating, because we have smaller-sized girls on the team, and it's not fair for them to wear super big uniforms."

Zagara also had problems with her basketball uniform during freshman year. "[They gave me] shorts that were extra extra large, and during one of my games, they almost fell down, so then I got a smaller size after that," she said.

Sophomore soccer player Katy Christian said that the new uniforms the team wore last fall fit better than past uniforms. "I think we had problems with the shorts fitting. I know a lot of people complained about that," she said.

In addition to basketball, Zagara also rows and said the crew team got new uniforms this year. Since crew is a club sport, players purchase their own uniforms. The women's crew team used to wear spandex shorts and a tank top, but now they wear unisuits. "It's what all rowers wear, like Olympic rowers, collegiate rowers," Zagara said. "We were one of the only teams at the regattas we would go to that had just spandex and a tank top."

Junior Eliza Bennett plays softball and field hockey and likes the field hockey uniforms the school pays for. "They're a super

Women's basketball player Meilani Walker, a freshman, shoots a free throw with her uniform shorts rolled up at the waist during a game against Medina. **Photo by Mae Nagusky.**

nice material," she said. In comparison, Bennett described the softball uniforms as being thick, unathletic and "unsuited for the sport."

In past seasons the school has only provided softball players with two jerseys and players had to buy their own pants. Readance said that the Athletic Department will meet the uniform requests of coaches, but sometimes coaches only request part of a uniform so that players can choose the rest, which is why the players bought their own pants.

Rucker said the school has not provided softball pants in the past so players can pick a prefered style and brand -- as long as the pants are black and and have belt loops so players can wear a red belt with them. "They can choose their style of pants that fits them best," she said. The team will be getting new uniforms this season and the school will provide pants.

According to Bennett, this has been an obstacle to participation in the past, because if players can't afford pants or can't buy them in time for the beginning of the season, they are unable to play. She said that a teammate was unable to play during the season opener two years ago because she did not have uniform pants. However, the high school provides baseball pants.

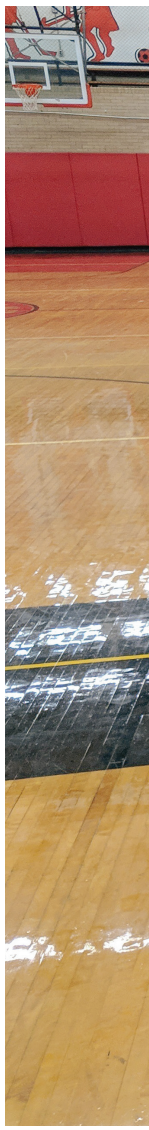
Last season, the softball team raised $1,200 by collecting used shoes. The team was able to buy equipment, a new pitching machine and team sweatshirts with the money. Connor Deckard, a sales representative from BSN Sports, works with Shaker coaches and the Athletic Department to provide uniforms and apparel. Deckard has only worked with Shaker for a year, but has provided new basketball uniforms and is preparing football uniforms for next season.

BSN Sports is the largest team apparel and uniform distributor in the country, with more than 1,000 sales representatives. The company is based in Dallas, Texas, but the Northeast Ohio location has 10 to 12 sales representatives. BSN Sports distributes uniforms and apparel from Division I colleges, such Kent State University and Cleveland State University, to Little League Baseball.

Deckard said that once a coach decides what brand they would like to order, he will send catalogs and then later bring samples of the uniforms to the coach. Once the material and style are chosen, the coach will create a design or ask Deckard to do it for them.

Designs are chosen on a team-to-team basis, and they can be created by coaches, parents or sales

> "When my uniform looks good, my confidence goes up a little bit, and now I can be concerned about how I'm going to perform instead of when my uniform starts falling off and having to tuck it in."
>
> Adaeze Okoye
> *senior*



Members of the softball team gather around shoes they collected and donated last year. The team made $1,200 and was able to buy equipment, a new pitching machine and team sweatshirts with the money. **Photo by David Vahey.**

representatives. Zagara said parents designed the crew uniforms for this season. "They didn't really ask for any of our input, so they wouldn't have been what I picked, but I'm just happy we have unis now," she said.

Christian said she likes the soccer uniforms, and that they are more interesting than the previous kit. "I really like, especially, the away ones. The white looks really cool," she said.

"We have seen a trend over the past few years of uniforms being more form-fitting, less flowy, and slightly tighter fitting. This is especially true in football and basketball, where we see athletes wearing their uniforms smaller than the generation before them. Uniform styles and fit is usually cyclical, so it would not surprise me to eventually see a trend back towards the looser-fitting uniforms someday down the road," Deckard said. Readance said that vendors like BSN will often notify him and coaches about deals from companies such as Nike or Under Armour.

After uniforms selections are

Shaker is currently represented by the windows logo, the interlocking SH logo and Tuffy, the Raider.

approved by the Athletic Department, they go through a series of approvals throughout the high school and administration building before they are purchased. The process starts in the Athletic Office with Readance and athletic administrative assistant Vikki Long. Then, uniform purchase orders are approved by accounting specialist Marian Steenbergh and Principal Eric Juli. Afterward, district administrators approve the purchase order. Readance said that a uniform purchase order can be approved by six to 10 people before it's purchased.

Although uniforms have to be approved by the district, teams can choose to buy spirit wear without district approval since the school does not own it. Teams often set up online stores through a vendor, such as local company Fuzion Sports, to sell apparel and equipment to players, parents and the community. Once teams order from these stores, the Athletic Department processes the purchase order to make it easier for teams, but the money spent on spirit gear comes from individual players or team fundraising.

However, the Athletic Department may have a larger role in selecting spirit gear in the future, as the district is currently discussing changes that will create more unified branding throughout the district. "That's going to be district-wide, but obviously with athletics being so visible, that's something that could be out there in the next two, three years where throughout the district you will see a more consistent message," Readance said.

Readance said the district is also discussing what logo will represent the district in academics, athletics and extracurriculars. Readance said this could be the Raider, named Tuffy, the new SH logo created by football coach Alex Nicholson or something else. Currently, the district is represented by the Raider, the SH logo and the Shaker windows logo.

Readance is unsure what branding the district will choose or if they will select one logo, like the Beachwood School District did, or if the district will approve different logos, like Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District uses. Beachwood is exclusively branded by the Bison, from academics to athletics. Heights has approved depictions of their tiger to be used in athletics or academics.

Okoye said that her uniform can affect her performance. "When my uniform looks good, my confidence goes up a little bit, and now I can be concerned about how I'm going to perform instead of when my uniform starts falling off and having to tuck it in," she said.

Christian said that uniforms are important because players' identities are tied to their jersey numbers. "It's yours; people can shout it from the stands," she said.

Christian said that jerseys represent the team. They are "something you can wear to school and feel really great about it, especially if you play team sports, you feel like a member of the group."

THE LONG AND SHORT OF BASKETBALL UNIS

Ari Green *Journalism II Reporter*

Fortunately for the men's basketball team, uniforms don't determine final scores – or they would come up short every time.

Basketball is an evolving sport. Two examples of that evolution include the addition of the shot clock in the NCAA to defeat stall offense and widening the NBA lane to accommodate ever-larger athletes. One symbol of the game's evolution is the ever-lasting change in the length of uniform shorts.

Andrew Loney, a sophomore captain of the JV basketball team, thinks that the trend toward shorter uniform shorts has been induced by both comfort and popularity.

"I think it's a comfort thing. It's easier to play with shorter shorts, and I feel like kids look up to athletes who wear shorter shorts," he said.

In the '70s and '80s, Magic Johnson and Larry Bird fought their iconic battles in shorts that hardly separated themselves from underwear. But about a decade later, Michael Jordan requested a longer hem because he wanted to wear his UNC college shorts under his Chicago Bulls uniform, according to dish.com. Soon, players across the league were following Jordan's lead. In the early 2000s, Philadelphia 76ers point guard Allen Iverson's shorts could have passed for sweatpants – an exaggerated take on Jordan's look.

But uniform shorts have been shortened once again. Now, players such as LeBron James and WNBA player Sophie Cunningham, as well as collegiate basketball players rock shorts reminiscent of Johnson's and Bird's.

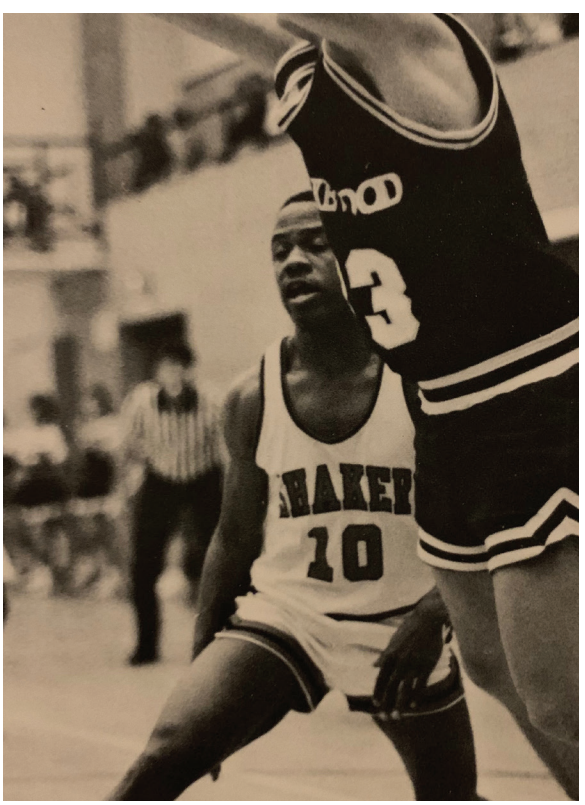
Ayden King, one of only two sophomores on the men's varsity squad, likes shorter shorts and thinks they have resurfaced because more people are recognizing the accomplishments of Johnson, Bird and the play of their era. "It's cool how they made their way back," King said.

Men's JV head coach and varsity assistant Kevin Foster ('99) was a member of Shaker's 1999 state runner-up team. He recalls that his uniforms were handed down from older generations, so the shorts were pretty short, but the shorts he owned followed the trend and were long and baggy.

As a coach, Foster said he doesn't mind the idea of short shorts, but he wishes they fell a little lower on his players' legs. "Short short game is just a little bit too short now," he said. "There's just way too much thigh."

For men, the average length of shorts was about 11 inches, according to Menshealth.com. That length extends down past the knees. Now shorts fall above the knee cap and look similar to Nike.com's image of the eight inch shorts.

Senior Spencer Glatley, who manages the men's basketball teams, favors the shorter style. "I like them," he said. "I think it adds more personality to a players uniform and makes a player stand out."



A Raider player in a short-hemmed uniform defends against Lakewood during the 1987-88 season. **Photo by Gristmill.**

Junior Alex Benson plays in medium length shorts Jan. 7 versus Euclid. **Photo by Isaac Weiss.**

B L A C K I S

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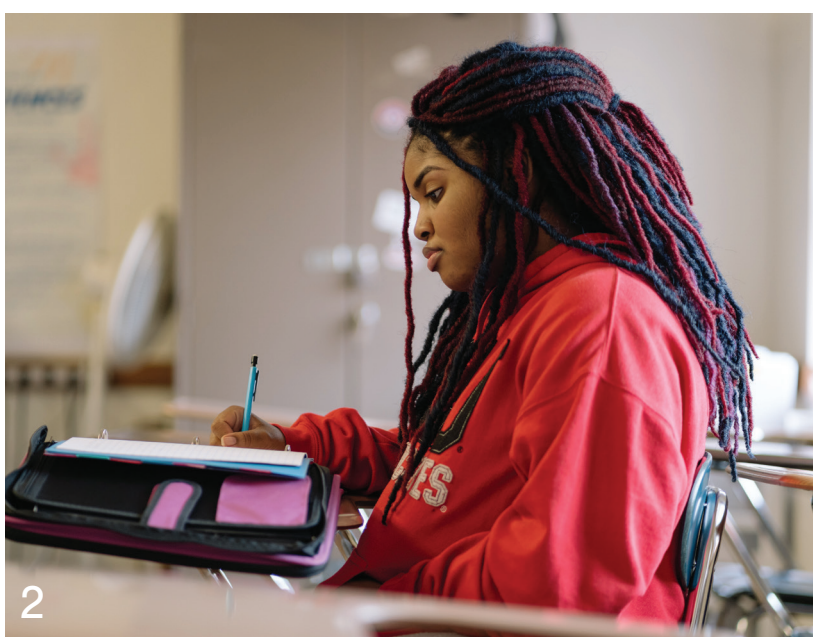
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1. Katelyn Frizzell 2. Maiya Simmons 3. Makiya Gardener
4. Tanaziona Lucious 5. Madison Owens 6. Wynter Brooks
7. Sharita Hill 8. Nicole Owens

BEAUTIFUL, BY ANY STANDARD

5

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8

Mae Nagusky *Editor-in-Cheif*
Photos by David Vahey

For the first time, Black women hold five major beauty crowns, but students and staff say media images perpetuate western beauty standards

When junior Tanaziona Lucious decides she wants to straighten her hair, she prepares to embark on a four-hour, painstakingly frustrating process.

Before doing anything else, she checks the outside temperature and humidity to make sure her hair won't frizz up as soon as she steps outside and won't get wet if it rains. Lucious also makes sure she's not playing a sport for the next three days, because sweat will ruin what she is about to do. If any of those conditions are not suitable, she leaves her hair as is.

She usually wears braids, so first she needs to take them out. She slowly uncoils each twist and turn in her hair. That step takes about 90 minutes.

She steps into the shower and lets the water seep into her thick hair for about 10 minutes. Once all of her hair is wet, she shampoos it for about five minutes, then rinses it. Next, while deep conditioning her hair, she combs away any dead strands, which catch in the wide-tooth comb. She then rinses her hair once more. She repeats this rinse, shampoo, rinse, condition, comb, rinse cycle a second time; the process takes about half an hour.

After she gets out of the shower, Lucious lathers her hair with a deep treatment oil to ensure her scalp is hydrated. If she doesn't, her scalp will become dry, itchy and produce lots of dandruff.

She covers her hair with a shower cap so the heat doesn't escape, and she leaves the oil treatment in for about 20 minutes before removing the cap, jumping back in the shower and rinsing out the oil.

After the second shower, she towel-dries her hair, then starts the blow drying process. It takes Lucious about an hour to thoroughly dry all of her hair.

She then pulls her hair into a ponytail bun at the top of her head. And, two and a half hours after she began this odyssey, the straightening begins.

Little by little, beginning with the line of hair that grows at the base of her neck, moving right to left, Lucious squeezes segments of her hair between the flat iron's two plates. She holds the flat iron there for two seconds and then moves on to the next section because if she holds it for too long, her hair will burn. If the flat iron accidentally touches her skin, she will jump because of the heat. Next, her rattail comb helps her divide her hair into another section. She feeds more hair into the straightening iron. Even with her careful effort to not damage her hair, she is repulsed by the odor when the iron singes some strands.

If Lucious is lucky, and it's cloudy outside, with gentle breezes and little sun, her hair will remain straight for three days.

Two hours later, her naturally curly hair is as straight as a white girl's.

After she irons her hair, Lucious must wrap it up. She grabs her comb and brush and brushes her hair so that it's swaddled around her head. She wraps a scarf around it so that it stays compressed. If she ties the scarf too tightly, her hair will mold more than it should and lean to one side. The scarf's pressure will create a dent on her forehead, which will start to hurt.

If she ties it too loosely, her hair will not be straight anymore or controlled when she wakes. After the unbraiding, the two showers, the four chemicals, the towel drying, the blow drying and the ironing — if she sleeps wrong and her wrap comes off — Lucious's hair will revert to it's curly essence.

With the scarf wrapped carefully around her head, she sleeps on one side of her body and is very conscious not to fall off the bed so the wrap doesn't come off.

If Lucious is lucky, and it's cloudy outside, with gentle breezes and little sun, her hair will remain straight for three days.

Alona Miller

Because Lucious used to endure this process once every four months, she became emotionally and physically drained. She straightened her hair that frequently to prepare for important events or for school pictures. So she stopped using the flat iron and began using a chemical relaxer that permanently straightens hair but, because of the chemical reaction, creates heat that damages it as well.

Her hair was not healthy; it was dead and no longer naturally curly and growing.

But Lucious has not straightened her hair in more than a year since she found out it was suffering from heat damage. She cut her hair and has since restored the health of her curls and is loving them.

"Beauty is acceptance of who you are," she said. "Try to prosper on that instead of trying to conform to another standard, instead of embracing the one that you have yourself."

Whether done with a hot iron or with a chemical, Lucious' straightening odyssey, which transformed tight curls to smooth locks, is the result of a chemical reaction. Licensed cosmetologist Ashley Lokash, guest service leader at The Paul Mitchell School in Cleveland, explained the science behind straightening hair.

She said hair has three different kinds of bonds: hydrogen, disulphide and salt. These bonds link chains of the hair's amino acids together.

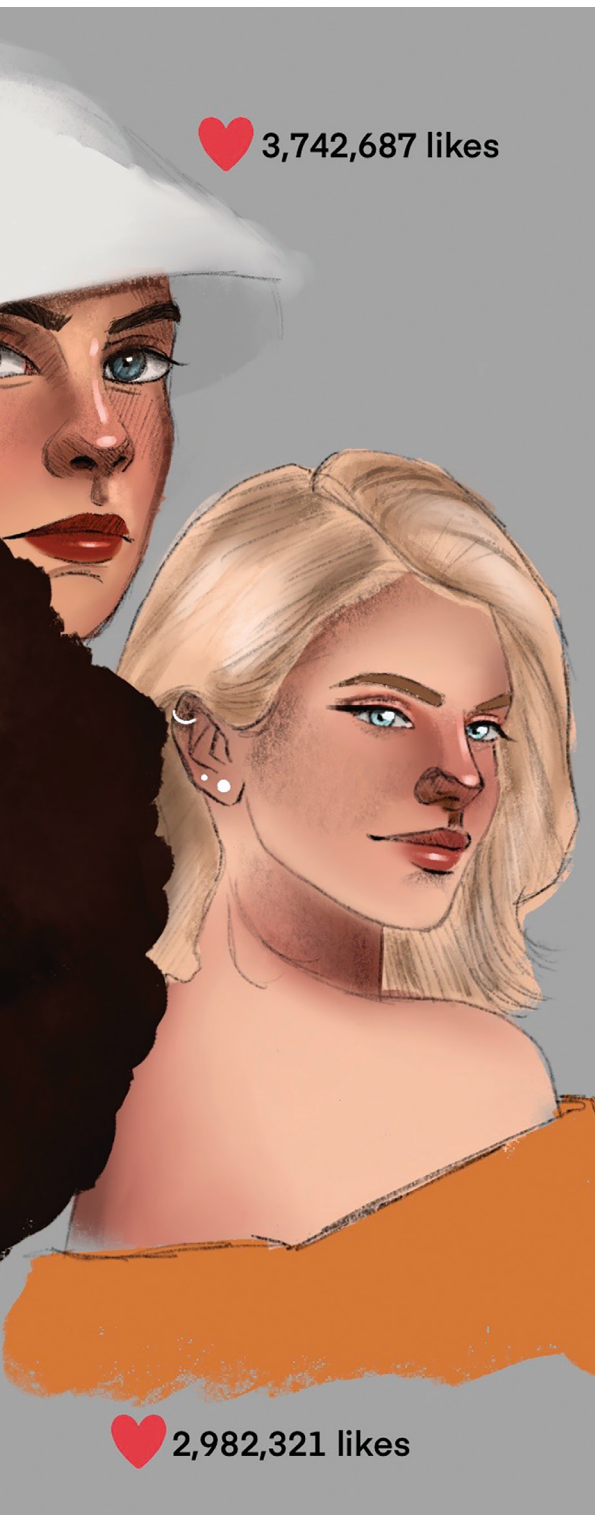
Salt bonds are broken by pH changes in the hair. By using pH balanced shampoos and conditioners, hair's pH will reform and stabilize these bonds.

Hair's hydrogen bonds are broken when it is strained by extreme heat. While flat ironing hair, the hydrogen bond breaks to make hair straight.

Hair can revert to its natural state by conditioning and careful treatment.

There are two disulphide bonds in hair. When someone

1,285,168 likes
2,245,398 likes



Alona Miller

chemically straightens their hair, they lose one of their disulphide bonds, which weakens the hair. "Once you lose your disulphide bond, it never comes back. You can never replace it," Lokash said. Bonds are intact in new hair.

You might be wondering at this point, why would anyone do that to their hair?

Lucious's mom, Lois Robinson, likes the look of straight hair. "I don't have a particular reason why. I just like the way it looks," she said.

We all do.

Because long, straight hair — often blond — is a foundation of western standards of beauty for women, and whether we have it or not, we learn to value it above all other kinds of hair.

Senior Madison Owens last straightened her hair five months ago. She usually straightens it once or twice a year. She said that when she does so, people often compliment her on it, and one of her teachers even told her that she should wear it like that more often.

"I was getting compliments, I felt like, just because it was so different than my natural hair," said Owens. "It did not offend me when they complimented my straight hair, but I still don't understand why they preferred my straight hair rather than my faux locs."

"I know it wasn't coming from a malicious place, but it's definitely something that I noticed," she said.

Faux locs, a temporary style, are hair extensions installed by twisting or braiding natural hair and attaching it to long, sometimes colorful, braids.

Junior Maiya Simmons said she no longer conforms to others' beauty standards. It has been more than a year since she last straightened her hair, but she used to do it every month. "Honestly, the most times when I used to get complimented about my hair was when my hair was straight, and I haven't straightened my hair in, like, a year, because I hated it," she said.

Owens said that the people around her have always told her that to be beautiful, she needs to follow these and other western beauty standards. For instance, she said that during summer, when her skin tone is darker, relatives will tell her to get out of the sun because she is getting too dark.

Dr. Linda Heywood is a professor of African American studies and history at Boston University. She has written and co-written five books about the African experience.

Heywood said that it is essential for parents to teach young Black girls to be proud of who they are and to assert themselves so that they will not feel confined by America's beauty standards. "One's personality should be formed at a very young age so that it doesn't matter what people say about you, but you know who you are, you know what you are, you have your own standards of beauty. And you shouldn't feel ashamed of who you are and what you look like," she said.

Junior Wynter Brooks said that magazines shaped her sense of ideal of beauty to include white, skinny, perfect women. "I was so unsure of myself, and I feel like society molded me into the person I am today, and that's not really a good thing," she said. "I feel like I've been told so much stuff in my life about what I should be, and who I should dress like, and what I should act like that I started acting and dressing like that." Brooks has straightened her hair once in her life, and that was about four years ago.

Junior Maiya Simmons said it has taken her a long time to realize that she's beautiful. "I love the fact that I'm different," she said. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Simmons said that magazines have taught her that beauty is clear skin, long hair or perfect curls. She doubted her beauty growing up, but has stopped caring what other people think of her appearance and started to love all of herself. "I am who I am. I love who I am," she said.

According to The Los Angeles Times, Black American consumers spent an estimated $2.56 billion on hair care products in 2016. Senior Mikayla Wilson said these products are expensive. "It's annoying. Not everyone has 50 to 100 dollars to spend on hair products a month," she said.

For instance, Aveda's Be Curly Shampoo is $21 for an 8 ounce bottle, and an eight-ounce bottle of Carol's Daughter leave-in moisture is $12. Because Black students face texturism, they are encouraged to use more of those products. Texturism is the idea that some hair textures are more beautiful than others. In particular, the looser the curl, the smarter, more attractive, and feminine a Black woman is.

Discrimination based on Black hair can be traced to slavery, when slave owners gave preferential treatment to those who had "good hair" — a term still used today to describe Black hair that more closely resembles European hair textures. Black people long ago developed techniques to straighten their hair in order to achieve a higher social status.

Heywood, of BU, said that Black women are scrutinized in job interviews and in public based solely on how their hair appears. "Your hair reveals something about you that people may interpret based on their own biased notions of what hair should look like," she said. "If I press my hair, it doesn't mean that I want to be white. If I straighten my hair, it doesn't mean that I want to be white. I should have choices in how I want to present myself."

Science teacher Sharita Hill said that her 9-year-old daughter came home from school one day when she was 5 and said she wanted straight, blond hair. "After that," said Hill, "I made it my mission to make sure she understood that different didn't mean bad, especially when it came to her hair."

Hill said she allowed her hair to grow and wore it naturally after her daughter was born to show her that natural hair is beautiful. She buys books and dolls for her daughter that feature Black girls who have Afros and curly hair. "I try to — I guess, in a sense — flood my daughter with positive images of self so that she could understand, 'Oh, it is different, but here's why it's great,' " she said.

Hill said that when she wears her natural hair, she hopes to gain greater acceptance from her peers. "I hope that when I wear my natural hair, people view me as being more beautiful, because that is who I am at my purest or rawest form," she said. She said she last straightened her hair three months ago and usually straightens it twice a year.

The decisions Lucious, Owens, Hill and Simmons make about their hair are contemporary examples of the revolutionary role hairstyles have played in Black history, race and identity. When a Black woman wears her natural hair, she makes a statement.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s challenged both U.S. laws and social norms, including hairstyles. By reclaiming their natural hair, Black activists made political statements. Angela Davis, a prominent member of the Black Panther movement and human rights activist, sported a famous Afro. That style became a symbol of cultural independence for Black people.

Simmons said that the natural hair movement began with the actions of a few women who resisted and wore their natural hair. "We need to embrace our natural hair, natural makeup without lightening our skin tone with makeup," she said. Without the brave women wearing their natural hair, "there would still be too many young Black girls thinking [they] have to straighten their hair to be beautiful."

> "There would still be too many young Black girls thinking [they] have to straighten their hair to be beautiful."
>
> Maya Simmons
> *junior*

Hill said she notices more Black students pushing back against dominant beauty standards. "In my generation, we kind of tried to submit to this generalized idea of what beautiful meant. You needed your hair straight, you needed to wear these pants, you needed to wear these shoes," she said. "[Today], the natural hair movement is a really big thing. Students wear whatever they want. Brands don't really mean nearly as much as they did in my generation."

Brooks said that Black people are increasingly documenting their natural beauty on social media. "Black people take pride in their hair, because our hair is just now being accepted, so we just want to show it off," she said.

Hashtags that celebrate the power and intellectual prowess of Black women include #Blackbeauty or #BlackGirlMagic. More than 19.1 million Instagram posts use #BlackGirlMagic.

Simmons made the switch to her natural hair and had difficulty adjusting. "Even trying to become natural, it's a journey, it's a process, and it teaches

you how to love yourself. It's a struggle, honestly," she said.

"I used to think that I loved my hair straight when I was younger, but that's just because it was socially acceptable."

Black hair is compelling enough to inspire filmmakers. In 2009, Chris Rock produced and narrated a documentary titled "Good Hair" that examined the history of Black hair throughout modern Black culture. A

short feature titled "Hair Love" won the 2020 Academy Award for best animated short film. The film promotes self-love by depicting a father eventually learning how to style his young daughter's hair.

While these films make strides in promoting self-love, they do not make a difference in the policies surrounding natural hair in the workplace.

In 2019, "Dove" carried out a research study to identify the magnitude of racial discrimination Black women experience at work. Eighty percent of Black women respondents said they have to change their hair from its natural state to fit in at the office. The study concluded that Black women's hair is 3.4 times more likely to be perceived as unprofessional.

Later that year, California state legislators introduced the CROWN Act. It aims to ensure protection against discrimination based on hair texture. CROWN stands for "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair." California was the first state to sign the bill into law. Since then, five other states have enacted the Crown Act; Ohio is not one of them.

There would be no need for the CROWN Act if western beauty standards did not prevail. These western standards don't stop at hair; they privilege light skin over dark skin, too. While Black students may be able to straighten their hair to conform to social norms, they cannot alter their skin.

Colorism is discrimination against individuals of a darker skin tone, typically among people of the same racial group.

Black students and staff said that they did not think they were accepted or beautiful as a child because they did not see their skin color in the wider culture.

Brooks said that when Black women are portrayed in the media, they usually have a lighter skin tone and light brown eyes. "I feel like that's a problem," she said.

Owens said that slavery accounts for colorism within the Black community. She said that lighter-skinned slaves were granted more privileges than others. "[Slavery] started this whole divide, and we're continuing that, we're furthering that, and it's just separating our own community when we should be for each other," she said.

Jessica O'Brien, who teaches African American history at the high school through a Kenyon College course, said lighter-skinned slaves fulfilled household roles. "Somebody that looked more closely related to European was much more accepted inside the home than somebody who was much darker skinned. They would usually be out working," she said.

O'Brien said white families would say, "You may cook my food if you're darker skinned, but you can't hand it to me. I want the lighter skinned person to actually be the person that's seen." The favoritism created animosity within Black communities.

O'Brien said some slaves attempted to pass as white to escape slavery. "Many lighter skinned

Black Women in Pageants

1921
Miss America pageant begins. It started out as a bathing suit contest to attract tourists to Atlantic City, New Jersey.

1952
Miss Universe begins as a marketing stunt by a California clothing company. At first, the pageant was combined with the Miss USA pageant and it was not broadcast until 1955.

1977
Janelle Commissiong was named the first Black Miss Universe.

African Americans struggled because they weren't always accepted by African Americans because they weren't dark enough, and if they chose to become white, they had to go. They really had to give up a piece of themselves," she said. "You have to give up everything of yourself that you used to know. You have to join this other side that you might not agree with, but you will survive and you will not be treated harshly if you change."

The obvious benefits of passing white in American history were to live a life of social and economic privileges.

Black people appearing white could escape the threat of racial violence from political disenfranchisement and powerlessness. Such benefits persist today. But one of the penalties of passing white is rejection from the Black community.

Lucious gave an example. "If you're mixed and you look more white than you do Black, they say you're not really fully Black," she said.

Junior Indira Rice said she experiences this treatment. "People don't believe me when I say I'm Black because I don't look BFlack," she said. "My name is a big part of it, too, because I'm a Black girl with an Indian name."

While lighter-skin women may not always be viewed as Black by some classmates, they are sometimes viewed as more beautiful by other peers, which further divides the Black community.

Those features are so idealized that some white people aspire to them. Freshman Jakeia Banks said that it's a trend today for white people to want to look more Afrocentric by darkening their complexions with spray tans. However, Banks said, "As soon as an actual person of brown skin color goes and celebrates their skin color, people look down on them."

Rice said there is cultural ap-

BEAUTY LIMITS

"Exotic" women are women who look like they are from a different part of the world and their unfamiliarity adds to their beauty.

Hill said that when she was growing up, boys said they would only date light-skin or "exotic" girls.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the number of interracially married couples has increased from 310,000 in 1970 to 651,000 in 1980, to 964,000 in 1990, to 1.46 million in 2000 and to 2.34 million in 2008.

While interracial marriages are becoming more popular, some people will not date outside of one race.

Owens said she knows white people who only date white people and Black men who would never date a dark-skin woman. "That is racist," she said,"because you [won't] date them because they are Black, not because of any other defining characteristics."

Owens said there are other barriers preventing her Black friends from dating white boys. "I have had friends who told me they wouldn't date a white man because they would be fearful that they're just being fetishized," she said. A fetish is an object of excessive or irrational sexual desire.

Brooks said she tries not to base attraction of skin color, but it sometimes happens subconsciously. "I'm more attracted to Black women, but I don't want to say I wouldn't date anyone out of my race," she said. "I've met a lot of people, especially in the gay community, that say they don't date Black people."

Sophomore Katelyn Frizzell said she is friends with a lot of white boys but doesn't think that they are attracted to her. "I don't think white boys like me because of my skin tone; they gravitate toward white girls," she said.

When junior Avery Luke's friends tell him that they only like one type of woman, he does not question them, because that's their opinion. "I could date anybody from Black to white to blue. I really don't care about the skin color at all," he said.

1983
Vanessa Williams was named the first Black Miss America.

1990
Carole Anne-Marie Gist is the first Black Miss USA contestant.

1991
Janel Bishop became the first Black Miss Teen USA.

2019
Toni-Ann Singh named Miss World. Cheslie Kryst named Miss USA. Kaliegh Garris is Miss Teen USA. Nia Franklin is Miss America. Zozibini Tunzi named Miss Universe. They are all Black women.

propriation on Instagram, such as white people wearing Black hairstyles and darkening their skin tone. "Maybe people are trying to appreciate Black people more, but they're doing it in the wrong way. It's kind of offensive," she said.

Some white influencers and models on social media are passing as light-skin Black or biracial women — also known as "Blackfishing." Swedish influencer Emma Hallberg is known to darken her skin tone to look like a person of color but says she only sees herself as white.

The belief that beauty is subjective and personally defined exists despite western standards. Nevertheless, since 1921, Americans have judged women's appearance through annual competitions called beauty pageants.

Black women are usually not crowned, especially when wearing their natural hair. For instance, it took 63 years for a Black woman to win the Miss America competition. But in December 2019, five Black women won crowns in the Miss Teen USA, Miss USA, Miss America, Miss World and Miss Universe competitions, a historic first.

Owens said that natural hair is gaining acceptance. The reigning Miss USA, Miss Universe and Miss Teen USA are all Black women who wear their natural hair. "But I don't think it's preferred," Owens said. "More people of color are getting more recognition and getting more visibility in the media, so that way we feel more confident in ourselves," she said.

2019 Miss Universe winner Zozibini Tunzi said, "I grew up in a world where a woman who looks like me — with my kind of skin and my kind of hair — was never considered to be beautiful," she said during her acceptance speech. "I think it is time that that stops today. I want children to look at me and see my face and I want them to see their faces reflected in mine."

Owens said it warms her heart to see Black women getting the appreciation they deserve. "Had I been younger, and I had seen all five women being Black women getting such high recognition, it would have definitely boosted my own self esteem because of visibility," she said.

Simmons said that five Black women winning pageants is a step in the right direction. "It shows the younger generation of girls that 'I am pretty. I can be seen as pretty in the social world without having to change,' " she said.

What Americans considered beautiful has shifted over time. Hill said her views have changed about her beauty since childhood. "Growing up, I used to feel like the way I looked wasn't good enough because the image that was portrayed, even for African-American women, was that you needed to be fair-skinned, and you need to have straight hair," she said.

Assistant security supervisor Nicole Wilson said that people used to see beauty as a woman with a skinny waist, blonde hair and blue eyes. "Now, you will see

MEDIA SHIFTS PERCEPTION

Those younger generation of girls will feel more empowered and beautiful through representation. They can start to feel proud of what they look like if they observe people that they admire looking like them. While changing any norm — whether it's what constitutes beauty, who can get married, who can be a doctor — requires high profile exemplars. One way to create high-profile exemplars is to put them on screens and recognize their work. 23.6 million people watched the Oscars this year and 29.5 million people watched last year. While the Oscars may appear to be one night of TV, it is the culmination of all the hard work produced for a film put out that year. Those millions of people are observing who is in the spotlight and some even letting it affect their own ideals of beauty.

#OscarsSoWhite is a social justice campaign that began five years ago to highlight the disparities between the population of people and the amount of minorities congratulated during the Oscars. Just on Feb. 9, there were over 2,100 tweets with the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite, as Cynthia Erivo was the only actor of color nominated. The University of California, Los Angeles released a diversity report through the College of Social Sciences. They found that although minorities were about 40 percent of the U.S. population in 2017, they accounted for only 19.8 percent of film leads, 12.6 percent of film directors and 7.8 percent of film writers. According to statistica.com, in the 2015-16 TV season, 74.6 percent of roles for cable-scripted shows went to white actors, while 13.3 percent went to Black actors.

Casting minorities in TV and film roles affects how Black children view what is beautiful and normal. With minorities gaining roles, perceptions shift.

For example, as of November 2019, "Black Panther" generated more than 1.346 billion dollars. The fourth season of "Black-ish" averaged 4.270 million viewers per episode.

Alona Miller

all types of sizes, colors. It doesn't matter about the grade of your hair," said Wilson. "I think there has been a major change in it."

All students and staff interviewed gave their definition of beauty; no answers involved looks or skin color.

According to The Oxford English Dictionary, beautiful is "pleasing the senses or mind aesthetically." While the dictionary definition involves physical beauty that you can see, touch or feel, students see beauty as confidence and acceptance.

For example, Simmons said beautiful people value their unique appearance. "Beauty is just loving who you are and accepting yourself," she said. "I don't want to be one of those people that fits in with everyone else. I'm OK if my style is different from my best friend's style because that's what sets me apart."

BU's Heywood said that by owning your beauty, you are setting the beauty standards and not letting them control you. "You cannot change who you are, so you just have to assert yourself and be proud of who you are and what you look like. You shouldn't let other people define for you who you are," she said. "You first have to be comfortable with yourself, and then you could go anywhere and project that pride."

Simmons said that despite increasing awareness of socially constructed identities and norms, she cherishes her Black identity. Simmons said that if she wanted to change her gender, she could change her gender. If she wanted to change her religion, she could change her religion. "The one thing that I will never change, even if I could change, is my race, because I love being Black," she said. "You have to embrace it. You can't be scared."

While loving yourself and your body and your hair may seem impossible, Lucious has found her strength.

When I asked her if she thought she was beautiful, she answered matter-of-factly, "Yes!"

How to End Rape Culture

We need to recognize the structures and norms that make us all complicit.

Olivia Warren *Opinion Editor*

One in three U.S. women experience sexual assault in their lifetime, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. **Photo by David Vahey.**

No.

Somehow, this simple word has lost its power. When we hear, "No means no," we automatically think of consent and sexual assault. But the acceptance of sexual assault starts long before consent is at issue. It starts when people normalize everyday patriarchal behaviors — even in Shaker Heights.

In the very public main hallway or by the cafeteria doors, boys think it's acceptable to repeatedly ask girls out after hearing, "Sorry no, no thanks, no, no, no..."At lunch tables and in locker rooms, boys think they are entitled to evaluate girls' worth by their looks. And even more people think it's justifiable to witness this behavior and sit idly by. These daily occurences perpetuate rape culture.

Scholars define the phrase as "a culture in which rape is pervasive, prevalent, and normalized through societal attitudes about gender, sex, and sexuality." In rape culture, sexual violence is normal, and victims are blamed for the crime.

Rape culture manifests itself in ways invisible to us. Only when we look for it can we recognize its presence in the films we see, the streets we walk and the way we speak. In ways we are oblivious to, everyone can be an accomplice to rape culture.

For example, too often, adults teach girls what not to do instead of teaching boys that girls are sovereign humans, not property. Parents tell girls not to wear that dress; they don't tell boys that girls' bodies are not theirs for the taking. We must understand that we instill different lessons in boys and girls about responsibility and autonomy. Realistically, we need to teach girls some of these safeguards so they aren't left defenseless when the worst happens. I hope that boys know that mothers and sisters train us from an early age not to walk alone at night; that if we must walk alone at night, to never wear a ponytail because it is easier for an assailant to grab us by it; and that we never accept a drink we haven't seen opened and poured. When we go out, we make sure our clothes don't attract any unwanted attention. We put our headphones in when we walk down the street so we can pretend not to hear the catcalls. We call Lyft at night so we can request a female driver. The list goes on.

Adults don't empower us to say no and not fear the repercussions of being assertive. When girls take ownership of our opinions and defend our choices, we are seen as bossy, stubborn, difficult — or worse. A boy who asserts himself is a strong leader. A girl is pushy. But, if she stays silent, she's weak. Navigating reputation is an inescapable labyrinth of rape culture. The negative connotations associated with almost all of women's behaviors makes it impossible for us to be strong and feminine at the same time.

And just as often as we are told to comply with patriarchal standards, we are told that our destiny isn't really up to us. Parents warn girls that even their closest male friends can never really be trusted if they are using alcohol and drugs, so it is the girl's responsibility to keep herself safe and sober. Boys are not taught that it is their responsibility to make sure they are safe to be with. We are coached to believe that little reminders of how to dress and what to drink and who to talk to are real solutions to the ever-present threat of rape. Again, we unfortunately need these reminders, but by indoctrinating short-term solutions instead of responsibility and empowerment, we enable and accesorize rape culture.

Sexual assault and harassment happen in plain sight because we normalize them. Although I continually see the resilience of women, I see little progress toward ending rape culture and sexual assault. Every day, in every community, girls feel lesser because of the misogynistic history that shapes today's attitudes toward women. Shaker Heights and communities like it must reinforce feminist ideologies by giving a voice to women's experiences and focusing more on preventative education.

It wasn't until I began volunteering at the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center two summers ago that I realized it was possible to end sexual assault. At the CRCC, I was surrounded by people who dedicate their lives to being a small part of a long-

term solution. Whether through education, direct work with survivors or community outreach, each person furthered the CRCC's stated mission for the "elimination of sexual violence." My eyes opened as I listened to passionate people inspire change not only through experience, but through research and carefully conducted studies that document how we can change our actions and attitudes by educating ourselves to end rape culture.

The end starts with education. These studies suggest that a series of small, preventative steps made over generations will lead to a world without sexual assault. The use of appropriate language to describe sexual assault and harassment is vital. That means putting the blame on the assailant, not on the victim. It means that when you talk to a victim, your first questions are never about their level of intoxication, the type of clothes they were wearing or their decision to walk home alone. An insane myth in our society is that men's aggressive and violent behavior is natural, and therefore sexual assault is up to the victim to avoid. Men are not naturally predatory. Such behavior is a product of rape culture. If we keep our eyes open, it isn't hard to find all the ways that rape culture subtly poisons society. Rape culture reveals itself in our conversations, when women are judged for their clothing and their personal lives rather than their character. It's hidden in compliments: the way that girls are told they are pretty before they are told they are smart. And despite common belief, we all perpetuate these norms. No matter your gender or sexual orientation, everyone judges women for their expression of sexuality and appearance. Recognizing your own stance in a culture of objectification can help you begin to break it down.

In the abominable People v. Turner case, Brock Turner was convicted of sexually assaulting Chanel Miller in 2016. The case was famous nationwide not only because of the horrendous crime, in which Turner assaulted the intoxicated and unconscious 23-year-old Miller behind a dumpster, but because Turner is white, wealthy and was a star swimmer at Stanford University at the time. The judge, Aaron Persky, cited Turner's status when he sentenced him to only six months in jail with probation. Prosecutors had sought a six-year sentence. Turner was released after serving only three months.

Accredited media outlets also provoked backlash for their coverage because they referred to Turner as a star athlete at Stanford rather than an assailant. This seemingly minor choice in diction demonstrated rape culture's influence in the way we talk about sexual assault.

Rape culture's presence in our language also reveals itself through jokes. When people joke about rape, they demean it's impact. Jokes about sexual assault are never funny. That doesn't mean that we should demand that people walk on eggshells; our culture values satire and harsh humor. I find the line between jokes and offensive comments to be very clear, however, even when insults are disguised as jokes. A joke about being raped is not a joke at all. Horseplay can escalate quickly when a subtle "He's raping me" or "She's raping me" commnet desensitizes our reactions to sexual assault. This is not a joke — this is an accessory to rape culture. When it's funny, laugh. When it's offensive, shut it down.

According to Marshall University, one of eight achievable ways for men and women to help end rape culture is to stop using speech that objectifies or degrades women. When women are judged based on their appearance, as if they are dressing for the pleasure of others, it is our responsibility to stop that behavior, both in ourselves and in others.

It's a myth that belief shapes habit. In fact, it's the opposite. The more an action is repeated, the more ingrained that idea becomes. For example, the more we standardize the media's use of derogatory terms for women, the more we train ourselves to see women as objects. So each time we find ourselves judging women's worth on appearance, we can check our thought process and internalize positive and thoughtful statements of equality, of valuing humanity over appearance. These repeated behaviors reject the normalcies of objectification in rape culture.

The objectification and hypersexualization of women are not the only features of rape culture. We hear the phrase "toxic masculinity" frequently, but do we know what it means? According to The

Alona Miller

New York Times, it is behavior and attitudes characterized by "suppressing emotions or masking distress, maintaining an appearance of hardness and [using] violence as an indicator of power."

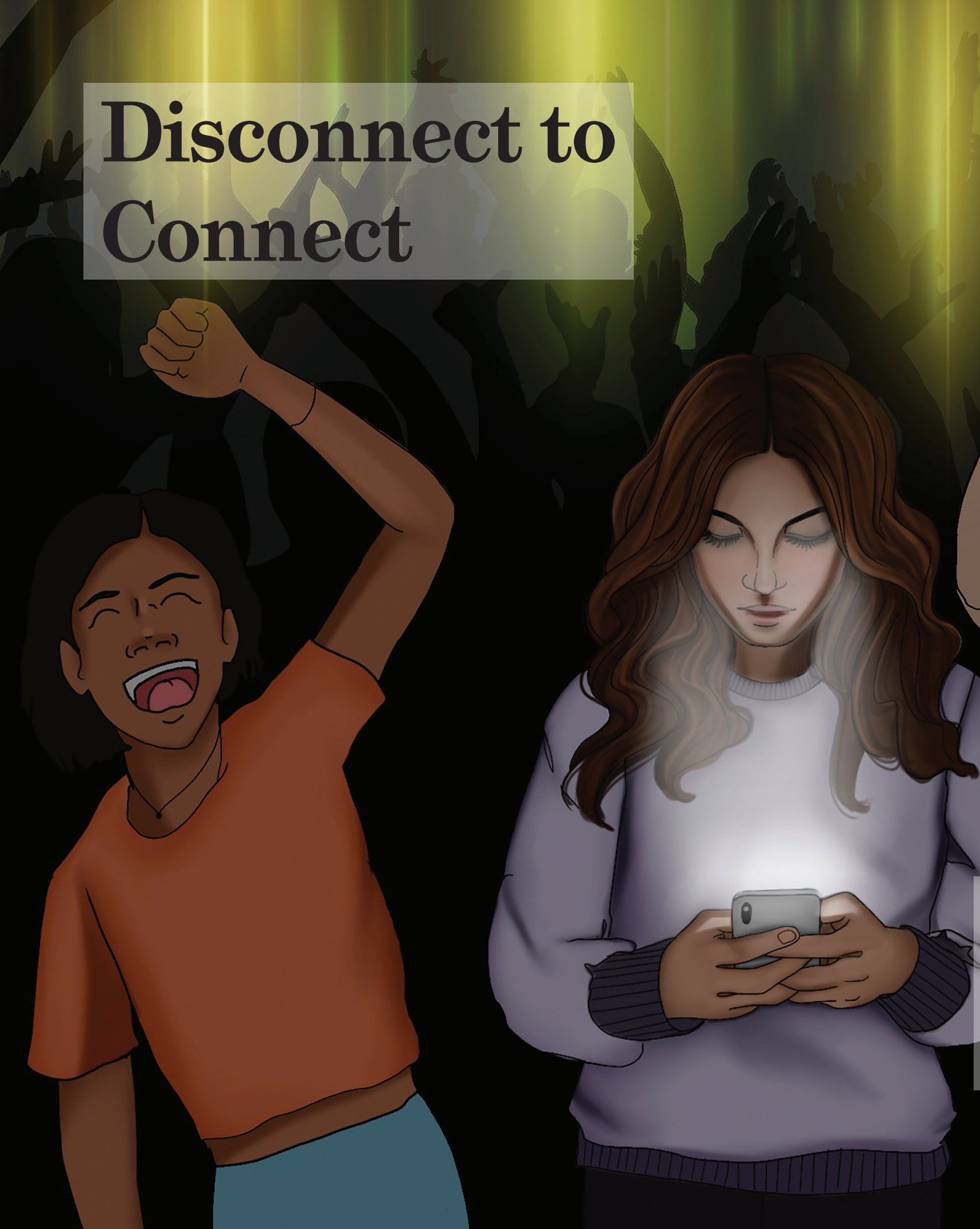
Toxic masculinity is a staple of rape culture, and it is something society is guilty of enabling. Because we accept and expect violence perpetrated by men, a person in America is sexually assaulted every 73 seconds, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. Sexual violence is due largely to a lack of education. Children must be taught to deal with conflict and to define their worth without using violence in order to assert control.

Another product of toxic masculinity is the stigma it entrenches about male sexual assault. According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, one in 10 victims of rape are men. The poisonous expectation of men's strength and superiority is not only harmful to girls; boys and men are often afraid to admit or define sexual assault when they are the victim. This depressing truth shows that rape culture harms us all.

Domestic violence is another consequence of toxic masculinity, but abuse begins in subtle patterns. The fallacy that men are naturally violent and aggressive leads to a culture in which expressions such as "That's so gay" are used to demean men and boys who behave kindly and respectfully. When we find ourselves embracing these norms, we must resist them and help boys find healthy outlets to express emotion and honesty.

It won't be easy, but enacting changes to end rape culture is overdue. Prevent sexual assault in its veiled beginnings. Stop objectifying women. Teach boys not to rape instead of teaching girls not to get raped. Accept the expression of the diverse masculine and feminine traits in all genders. Intervene when rape culture reveals itself. This is how we end sexual assault.

Disconnect to Connect



As social media's influence over society grows, it is important to cleanse and better connect with your reality

Olivia Peebles *Education Columnist*
Illustration by Alona Miller

I **started by** turning off Snapchat notifications. Next, I ended my Snapchat streaks — an addictive feature on Snapchat that tracks the number of consecutive days users Snapchat one another. Then I cut down my time on Instagram; I began to rarely post.

As I pared the time I spent on these apps, I realized how much I hated the way Instagram and Snapchat consumed peoples' lives, including my own.

I needed to connect not only with people in my life, but with my own priorities. It was time for a social media cleanse. To do this, I would have to remove myself from social media until I set my priorities straight and improved my relationships.

It's hard to remove something from your life that took up so much time. All I could think about was how many messages I would miss, how many stories I wouldn't see and how many people I couldn't contact.

I feared missing out on conversations with people I don't regularly see or talk to, or the memos for parties or plans with my friends. How would I spend my hours alone?

But I decided that regardless of how challenging or unenjoyable the cleanse might be, I had to do it.

I have always taken pride in earning good grades, playing sports and participating in extracurriculars, but I didn't have as much to be proud of during the first quarter of this school year. My grades began to drop, and I wasn't as strict about completing my homework, however I had no problem using social media for hours every night.

On an average day, I would come home after practice, eat dinner and take a break before studying and starting homework. By the time I got to it, it would be well into the night.

Because I did not manage my time well, I needed every minute from when I got to my room until I fell asleep to complete my homework.

My commitments and evening habits left no time or place for TikTok and Snapchat, but I used them anyway. I watched my work ethic and social habits change for the worse, while my use of these

apps skyrocketed.

My social media use made it easy for me to procrastinate. Whether I was engaging in a meaningless conversation in a Snapchat group chat or scrolling through an endless TikTok feed, I couldn't stop.

Starting my homework as the rest of my family went to sleep left me upset and sleep deprived. There was rarely a post or text that was satisfying enough to justify the amount of time I spent on my phone. In fact, I often felt like I had just wasted time I could never get back. I could have been working or talking with my family or friends about more important things than typical teenage drama. This horrible nightly routine caused a perpetual cycle of both minimal sleep and homework completed. As a result, I began to feel guilty and anxious. There was no way I could live up to my academic expectations and goals if something didn't change.

It wasn't only academics; I didn't call or speak to my friends as often as I once did. I saw my relationships diminish to emojis and abbreviated messages that rarely expressed how we actually felt. Most teenagers choose to text or Snapchat rather than calling, or even meeting in person. We miss out on the joy or sorrow of hearing people's voices, seeing their real emotions and carrying on conversations that rely on true connections and interactions, instead of the remote ones made when we're apart.

Early in the cleanse, nothing seemed to fill Snapchat's void. I could not think of what to do with all the time I had on my hands during class, in the car, in the hallways and even with my friends. So I would sit in silence, unsure of how to interact with the people around me as they browsed through constant updates on other people's lives and whereabouts. My instinct was to fill awkward spaces with social media. It required no effort. But without that instantaneity, it was difficult to make real connections.

I wouldn't consider myself an introvert, but without social media I felt much more shy and tended to overthink things. It would take me forever to ask some of my closest friends to hang out or participate in certain conversations. I often felt what my friends and peers were talking about had happened in a different world. I felt out of place.

It took nearly the first two weeks to accept that I did not need Snapchat to communicate. Once I got over my introversion, I found myself striking up conversations in person more often because I chose not to use the platform that made it so easy to connect and talk through the phone

Without Snapchat, I had to engage with surroundings. I began to branch out and talk to new people and develop the relationships I had with close friends. I could get a head start on homework in the few minutes before the bell. Most importantly, my mental health improved, as I began to adjust my unsustainable sleep schedule.

After about three weeks, the cleanse became easier to stick to, despite how much I feared missing out in the beginning. I was no longer bothered by missing out on things I didn't even know were happening. Without social media, I noticed how much my time management and work ethic improved. I had the time to think, sleep and focus on what was really important in my life.

I no longer felt like I was always missing out or disconnected from my friends. Instead, I was able to determine who my close friends were, gain two hours of sleep a night and raise my mediocre grades. I felt less confined by the social pressure to go out every weekend, pretend I enjoy artists such as Trippie Redd (meh) or take part in trends like dying a random strand of my hair pink (ugh).

To some, a social media cleanse may seem pointless. I thought so, too, at first. I deleted Snapchat impulsively, just to see how long I could last, as I accepted how much of a social and mental distraction it could be.

But, still, we live in the age of social media. We use it for speedy communication and informing others on social and political issues. It even influences our purchases, relationships, education and decisions, especially as we tune into other people's online lives.

These platforms have benefited our generation greatly and made us different from the generations that came before us. But these apps' flaws creep into our lives every day.

Students around the lunch table use their phones instead of interacting with one another. **Photo by David Vahey.**

By downloading Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, we build walls which keep us from physical interactions. These walls make it difficult to separate what we see online from reality. Members of Generation Z, born from 1995-2015, seek attention and acceptance from the people in their social circles, their communities and even strangers.

We crave so much attention and acceptance that we sometimes do whatever it takes to get it. I constantly help people with the process of posting pictures on Instagram, for example. The decisions leading up to a post is complex; teenagers consider what they post, when they post and how many likes their posts will earn compared to their last post or a friend's last post.

We use social media, especially Instagram, to define and measure beauty. This craving causes us to compare ourselves to others and to criticize others' appearance. What we choose to compare isn't always authentic, thanks to the use of filters and editing. Defining and measuring the beauty of celebrities, social influencers, peers and friends, whether it is authentic or not, can damage the self image of Instagram and Snapchat users.

Teenagers also seem comfortable saying anything from pointless gossip to private personal information over Snapchat, without thinking twice, because it will "go away in 24 hours." The impact of photos and videos can escalate before those who post even consider the consequences.

It may seem impossible, but an occasional social media cleanse, whether it is a month or even 24 hours, is necessary for everyone. Using it less made me aware of how to use it healthily.

After a month of staying off Snapchat, I redownloaded it to see if I noticed any differences in how I communicate, with whom and what I felt comfortable sharing over Snapchat. Browsing through the app, I could barely remember why I pursued that addictive attraction in the first place. Immediately, I noticed I found less pleasure in the distractions, gossip and meaningless conversations that Snapchat provided. It was no longer an instinct to swipe through stories and posts mindlessly until I ran out of things to do. Instead, I put down my phone to talk with my family, complete my homework, meet up with friends or just relax.

Social media seems like a pillar of life for teenagers, but real social interaction is irreplaceable. We need to take a step back, look at and live our lives without social media every now and then. All we have to do is put down the phone and call up our will to live life in person. All we have to do is detach.

PUTTING SAFETY FIRST

After recent changes to lockdown procedures, Shaker must revisit ALICE Training

The Editorial Board

Throughout the day, every student travels to as many as eight classrooms. Seven times a day, five days a week, we walk through the hallways around our building. But what happens if during those hallway trips, someone is shot?

We believe we are immune to danger because we are Shaker, but the reality is that with an assault weapon, anyone can erase that sense of safety in our halls.

According to Everytown Research, in 2019, gunfire on school grounds led to 32 deaths and 77 injuries. Until those shootings, students walked through the halls of their schools without incident, just as we do every day.

While the congressional split over gun legislation festers, we must do more to keep ourselves safe than just practicing lockdown drills.

On Nov. 22, students walking through the halls after sixth period ran into nearby classrooms when Principal Eric Juli announced a lockdown. Those already in class huddled in corners. One teacher guarded the door with a stick; another handed out scissors as self-defense weapons. Other students were left to fend for themselves in empty classrooms. People squashed under desks, unsure if they were truly protected. There was no sense of order. Either panic or apathy set in.

We learned later that no weapons were involved in the incident that precipitated the lockdown, which was called to prevent a fight that started in the cafeteria and continued outside the library from becoming a brawl as students filled the hallways after sixth period.

But students and parents were still terrified during the lockdown. Learning about the cause and absence of weapons came too late to prevent terror.

Three times a year, we practice huddling in a corner. We talk and laugh and use our phones. None of us take these lockdown drills seriously, because what would "hiding" truly do? This strategy reminds us of the Cold War, when students watched "Duck and Cover," a 1951 film in which Bert the Tur-

tle cheerfully retreats inside his shell to survive a nuclear attack. Students were instructed to hide under classroom desks, terrified of being incinerated by a nuclear bomb. Today, we watch Bert the Turtle in U.S. History classes and laugh at the film's absurd safety message.

Will future generations learn about how we turned off the lights, locked the doors and hid from armed assailants, all while chuckling about how this approach was supposed to keep us safe?

Lockdowns are our security blanket; we cling to them for comfort, but in reality, they don't fool anyone who comes with the intention of killing. All it takes is the pull of a trigger to render our lockdowns useless. Scissors and sticks won't stop a bullet without training and purpose in mind.

We need a clearer idea of what to do when our building goes on lockdown, something more concrete than turning off the lights and hiding under a desk.

The best solution: ALICE Training — Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evaluate. Whether at a high school, a house of worship, a hospital or any other setting, a licensed instructor can teach people how to fight back.

Other Schools in the Cleveland area have executed ALICE Training successfully, and if enacted in Shaker Heights, the school would prove to the community that lives are worth more than fiscal modesty. Co-founder of ALICE Training Lisa Crane said in February 2019 that the total cost would fall between $10,800 and $13,500 to train the whole building. The district looked into it in 2014 but chose not to pursue it because the administration has already begun to improve the way they execute lockdown procedures. Principal Eric Juli revamped the procedures after the Nov. 22 lockdown. Juli created three kinds of lockdowns in order to avoid disrupting learning for minor issues: "stay in place", "stay put" and a general lockdown.

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When he announced the "stay in place" procedure Jan. 22 and the "stay put" drill Feb. 7, Juli explicitly stated via P.A. what was going on and how he was dealing with it, which informed students and made them feel safe while also not disrupting learning. This approach is certainly an improvement on the way threats and incidents were handled in the past, but still, we must do more.

No student's only defense for their life should be a door and a dark corner. We are worth more than that. This is a call to our administration — it's time to revisit ALICE.

Student Fails Online Hula-Hooping

Sarah Brown, who fell victim to computerized physical education, tells of her trials and tribulations

Grace Wilkinson *OPS Editor*

In 2014, students in Shaker Heights began the search for a loophole to gaining the beyond-the-state-minimum physical education credit needed to graduate. This loophole comes in computer form and goes by the name of Brigham Young University. Students can take online BYU courses such as swimming, golf and bowling. Students have seen BYU courses as a saving grace when it comes to graduating on time. The Shakerite, however, has vowed to shed some light on the not-so-graceful tales of high school gym. Here, we give a girl who was denied her high school diploma a voice.

Sarah Brown decided to partake in online gym courses rather than cram the class into her already rigorous schedule. Brown has been a Shaker student since kindergarten and has always loved being active. She especially loved the physically demanding, yet irresistible, challenge that online hula-hooping offered.

For those who aren't familiar with the sport, it comes with a rich history. Hula hooping was first discovered in the early 2000s when the Woodbury Olympics were coming to fruition. Physical education teachers across Shaker Heights realized that the taxing yet rewarding "Pacer Test" — a multistage aerobic capacity test that grows more difficult as it continues —

> "The online avatar who is supposed to be my instructor threatened to hack my computer."

wasn't for everyone and decided to throw in a freebie for students. The teachers settled on putting a rim of plastic around the children's waists and demanding they ne'er let it hit the ground.

Brown found her love for the sport when she excelled in that Woodbury hula-hooping module, going so far as to earn her whole class extra popsicles after one especially impressive round of hip swiveling. Students threw roses at her feet and wiped tears from their eyes as the bell rang, signifying it was time to hide under a parachute so that it seemed like the class had gone missing when their teacher returned.

Throughout her middle school career, Brown had grown accustomed to emphatic applause after showing off her skills. But now her performances were interrupted by threats such

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as "This computer has a virus. Treat it in T-15 seconds or it will combust." When Brown failed to complete required tricks and pass certain levels of her gym course, she felt very discouraged. "The online gym teachers were incredibly upset with me when I couldn't get my lasso hooping above my head," Brown said. "Not only that, but they would belittle me, too. One time, when I was having trouble with my Isolated-Toss-Somersault-Catch sequence, the online avatar who is supposed to be my instructor threatened to hack my computer."

After training her Waist to Neck Transfer (arms inside hoop) trick to perfection, Brown felt ready for her final in online gym. She turned on her 1 to 1 Chromebook, logged onto the program, and began hooping like she'd never hooped before. She drew inspiration from people who have become legends of the ring. She chose Donna Summer's hit 1978 cover of "Macarthur Park" to accompany her in her final performance. Though Brown gained confidence from the swell of the chorus, and seemed to be energized by "sweet green icing flowing down," her performance lacked pizzazz and did not earn the score that RogerHub projected she needed in order to pass her online physical education class.

One gym credit short, Sarah Brown was not allowed to graduate with her 2019 peers. She can be seen at the Beachwood Mall in the LEGO store, constructing LEGO pilgrim scenes in order to obtain her final gym credit.

MORE THAN JUST WORDS

Students who prefer to be called African American. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Students who prefer to be called Black. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Student preferences for "Black" or "African American" mark the latest shifts in language that has been changing for centuries

Erin Williams *Profile Reporter*

Editor's Note: Amid the resurgence of the term "Black" to convey racial identity, the Editorial Board met and discussed whether The Shakerite would continue to use "African American," which has been the news organization's style since 1992, or "Black" moving forward. The board decided to use "Black" in order to expand inclusivity and specificity in accordance with guidelines set by The Associated Press.

When Dr. David Glasner, superintendent, sent an email on Sept. 10, 2019, that stated the district's intent to focus on "Black students excellence," he put the district on the side of those who prefer Black.

Glasner said that Shaker has begun using the term Black rather than African American in its published works. The shift came "because, for state assessment language, the state uses the term Black. That may not be the most intellectually rigorous decision, but we wanted to be consistent with the state terminology," Glasner said.

Evolving language for identifying Black people is not a new phenomenon. Over the last century, Black people have chosen terms ranging from colored to negro to Black to African American, only to reject some of them later. And while the district's decision was practical, the choice of an identifying term is much more complicated for Black people.

MAC Sister Scholars adviser

Tracy Williams has experience with each of these terms."I'm one of those people whose grandmother or great-grandmother might have been colored. My parents, on their birth certificates, were Negro," she said.

When Williams was in school, Afro-American was the term. Then Black took over. "And then, in the '80s, Jesse Jackson and some other leaders at some point decided on African American," she said.

Jackson, a civil rights activist, promoted the use of African American in the late 1980s as a way for Black people to come to terms with their enslaved past and to embrace their African heritage.

Today, people use both the terms, and there is no way to determine which is right for everyone.

Not everyone wants to be called African American. For some, the term does not adequately portray their heritage. More than 40 million Black people live in the United States, but not all of them have African heritage, and the majority of Black people worldwide have no American ancestry.

Williams said that African American only applies to Black people living in America, but Black can describe everyone. "I prefer Black because it's the term that I grew up with and because, for me, it's an umbrella term that accounts for the entire diaspora, as well as people who are mixed or multiracial but identify with their African American heritage," she said, "because we're everywhere."

> "I feel that people will say African American in order to not sound racist, and so they tip-toe around the word Black. But I prefer Black because I am Black."
>
> Felecia Hamilton
> *Shaker graduate ('18)*

Using Black includes people of African descent who live on every continent. Sophomore Alina Roach prefers to be called Black because her ethnicity is Caribbean. "My mom is actually not from America, and our roots are Carribean, so I'd rather be referred to as Black, because African American — when you think about it — means that you're from Africa and then moved to America but that's not my lineage," she said.

Some people prefer Black because they don't feel any connections to Africa. "I don't know enough about the African heritage to claim it," intervention specialist Kimberly Roberts said.

Sophomore Ethan Bryant prefers Black, too. "Why should we be called African American if none of us have ever been in Africa, and most of our ancestors were born in America?" he said.

However, entrepreneur Andrea Campbell said that African American is more specific than Black. "Black, to me, is a color, for real. I'm not Black in the sense of a color, but I do understand what they're saying. But really, I'm African American," she said.

Some of those who prefer Black say African American is overly sensitive. "I feel that people will say African American in order to not sound racist, and so they tip-toe around the word Black. But I prefer Black because I am Black," Shaker graduate Felecia Hamilton ('18) said.

Junior Jacqueline Johnson said that she has noticed someone starting to say Black and then

switching to African American. "It's kind of weird. Like, it doesn't offend anyone if you say African American or Black, because it's basically the same thing. I think they feel like it's a more respectful way to say Black," she said.

Sophomore Will Votruba, who is white, said that saying African American seems more racist. "I don't know why, but it just seems worse. We don't say, European-Americans, so yeah, I say Black. And I don't think there's anything wrong with saying Black."

Senior Madison Peebles uses the terms interchangeably depending on her environment. "In a school setting, I'm an African American student, somewhere formal. But when I'm, like, chilling somewhere, I'm Black. It just depends on where you are," she said.

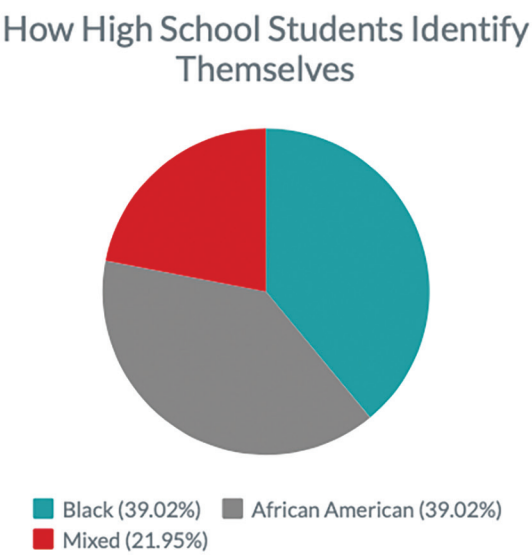
Social studies teacher Paul Kelly, who is white, also switches between the terms, depending on who he's with. "You know who you're friends with, and you know that they know who you are," he said. So with his friends, he'll say Black because they know that he's not using the term in an offensive way.

However, in class, Kelly says African American, because to him, Black is more casual.

Denise Harrison, a professor of Pan-African studies at Kent State University, described a situation in which a person's word choice could be taken offensively. "There are times when somebody says, 'That Black guy,' and it's kind of a pejorative term, the way they're saying it, or, 'He was African American,' where that person's racial identity doesn't really tell you anything.

"In those instances, I think that's problematic," she said.

Harrison said she raises this subject in class every year. "I talk to students about this, especially our students not of color, who oftentimes don't know what to say. I had an honors class where I just had to have the students say, 'African Americans, African Americans, Blacks, Blacks' because they were so uncomfortable," she said. She advises those students to ask people what identifying term they use themselves, in the same way that people do for transgender and nonbinary individuals.



Fifty students of color responded to a Shakerite survey about their preferred terms.

On the other hand, some who prefer to be called African American say that Black is too harsh. "There's always been this tension in the Black community around owning Black, but then also, as people who speak English, the negative connotations that go with the word Black," Williams said.

The Oxford English Dictionary documents nine senses of the word Black. The OED's abundant senses of the adjective form include some that are neutral: the color, any group of dark-skinned people, a kind of tea or coffee, a challenging ski run. Others, are negative: evil, wicked, foul, calamitous, dirty, angry and depressing. These negative meanings discourage some people from adopting Black as an identifying term.

The National Association of Black Journalists began capitalizing Black in its communications last year. The Associated Press made the change June 20. In its announcement, the AP stated that the new usage is intended to emphasize a person instead of a color. The decision was made after two years of research and debate, according to the AP.

"For a long time, I didn't like the term Black as it's not truly the color of my skin. My skin is a beautiful brown and should not be subjected to a dark and gloomy

Terms Follow Change

Negro - 1920s

The term “Negro” came from the spanish word “negro” which originally meant the adjective “Black,” in 1207. The OED documents that “Negro remained the standard designation throughout the 17th to 19th centuries, until the middle years of the 20th century.” According to slate.com, W.E.B. DuBois urged Black people to adopt “Negro” and abandon “colored” in the 1920s because it was “etymologically and phonetically” preferable. DuBois wrote letters to The New York Times and persuaded the newspaper to make the term its preferred style. Like “colored,” however, leaders rejected “Negro” during the 1960s, but it remains in the names of institutions such as The United Negro College Fund, founded in 1944.

Colored - 1960s

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, “Colored was adopted in the United States by emancipated slaves as a term of racial pride after the end of the American Civil War.” However, it became a negative term used by segregationists during the Jim Crow era, who installed “Colored Only” signs at drinking fountains and other public accommodations. According to linguist John McWhorter, Black leaders abandoned the term in the 1960s because of its connection to that time, but it persists in the name of institutions such as The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, founded in 1909.

Black - 1960s

“Black” became popular in the 1960s during the Black Power Movement to replace terms considered dated and offensive. According to the OED, it was “reclaimed as an expression of racial pride,” because in the past, it was considered offensive. Today, the rise of the Black Lives Matter activist movement, established in 2013, illustrates the momentum building for widespread use of “Black.”

African American - 1989

“African American” became popular when Rev. Jesse Jackson, a civil rights activist, promoted use of the term to indicate that Black Americans “are accepting their difficult past and resolving a long ambivalence toward Africa,” according to a 1989 The New York Times article.

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color, such as Black. But over the years, I've grown to accept and love the term Black because I've chosen to embrace it. Black is beautiful. It is not always gloomy," a student stated in an anonymous survey.

Johnson said that in the media, darkness and the color black are always bad, while light and the color white are good.

"Black is usually the bad guy," she said.

Sophomore Nadia Seymore prefers to be called African American "because it sounds more professional," she said.

Williams said that when she was in college in the late '90s and early 2000s, African American became more popular for academic reasons. "Sometimes, in your writing, it sounded more scholarly," she said.

Sophomore Ayande Joseph said that he prefers African American. "I feel it's more respectable and it's more respectful to our heritage and where we come from," he said. However, Joseph said he uses Black in everyday life because, to him, it's more natural than saying African American.

To Campbell, this debate is one big identity crisis that other people can't grasp."No one else can understand us trying to find our identity because we don't know our identity," she said. "We can't go back to our heritage beyond leaving Africa. Once we left Africa, we lost everything."

In Campbell's opinion, picking a term that best describes Black people would first require Black people to understand themselves and their own history.

To figure out which term he prefers, guidance counselor David Peake asked himself a question, one that anyone might use to decide.

He said, "What's African about me?"

WHY IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE WORD

Erin Williams *Spotlight Reporter*

I was filling out a job application when I was asked to identify my "race/ethnicity." I started to type "Black," but then deleted it and replaced it with "African American."

I think I did this because honestly, I thought it sounded not necessarily more professional, but less blunt than Black.

While writing an objective piece about whether to use the term Black or African American, I heard so many different opinions and arguments. And yet I still can't decide which term I prefer.

When I'm talking with my friends, I always say Black. I say Black in class, and I say Black to adults despite their status. I can't remember the last time I said African American, besides when I was interviewing people for my story and asked which term they preferred.

Erin Williams, *Profile Reporter*

At first, I definitely prefered to say Black. I thought it was annoying when white people would start to say, "Black," look at me, and then say, "African American." Also, African American could refer to a white South African who came to live in America. I thought of it as a double standard. White people identify as white, not European American or even Caucasian, so why is it such a big deal for us?

Thinking back on that question, though, I realize that it's an ignorant one. The debate over whether to use the term Black or African, in contrast to whether to use white or caucasian, is just too different in any way that you try to compare it, whether you're talking about the history or the experience.

I came to really like the idea of using African American. I love the idea of using the term to assert common ground for Black Americans because we're all American people with African roots.

However, in regards to the diaspora— which refers to people of African descent who live everywhere— I think Black is the better term to use. There are Black people all over the world, and they aren't American. I'll never forget a tweet I once saw. It went something like this: "My professor is so scared to say Black that he calls me African American even though we live in ENGLAND"

Yet, Black truly is a color, so it doesn't represent everyone. Also, because of colorism– when people believe lighter skin is better – people don't want to be called Black. Instead they say, "I'm a light skin," or, "I'm a brown skin," which just separates us even more.

"I think Black people struggled – still do struggle, to some degree – with owning their melanin, owing their Blackness," MAC Sister Scholars adviser Tracy Williams said.

I, myself, am brown, while my twin sister has light skin. We share the same family history, yet people try to separate us because we are different colors. Despite her light complexion, my sister prefers to be called Black.

This whole debate is, as entrepreneur Andrea Campbell said when I interviewed her, "one big identity crisis." There isn't a debate – that I've heard of— about whether white people should be called white or Caucasian. It's a common joke that if you were to ask a white person their ethnicity, they might say, "I'm 17 percent Italian, 24 percent Dutch, 52 percent German and 7 percent Native American." They know all about their history and roots and choose to embrace it, whether it's studying German in school or eating at an Italian restaurant.

But for Black people, we may know that we're 76 percent Nigerian, but knowing that doesn't really mean much to us because we don't know what Nigerian culture is. It is crazy to me that we know about Italian, Korean, and Hawaiin culture, but don't know about Ghanian culture, Morrocan culture, Ethiopian or Sudanese. Even writing that last sentence, I had to look up the names of more countries in Africa because it's not something we're taught about in school, and our parents can't teach us because they don't know, either.

David Peake, a high school counselor, attended one of his cousin's wedding and there was a Nigerian wedding and an American wedding. "I'm at the African wedding, and all his cousins that are from the continent are there, and they celebrate a different way. There are so many different cultural traditions, and I was thinking about it and I became sad, because I liked it. And I wondered what cultural traditions that I don't even know about, that I'm missing – I don't even know what I don't know.

"And I was sad because there's so much rich tradition, all this interesting stuff, and I have no knowledge of it," Peake said. He also expressed concern about not using African American, a concern that I share. To say that I'm not African American feels like denying my African-ness, which feels wrong to do, even though I don't express my African-ness either.

"Just because you were taken from the continent doesn't mean that you have to completely disassociate yourself from the heritage," Peake said.

I agree, and it's not like I don't want to express my African-ness. It's that I can't because I don't know anything about it. So the biggest problem, for me at least, with not saying African American is that we'll lose any connection we ever had with Africa. I learned that for most people it's not that big of a deal which word you use, but I think that everyone should consider which word they prefer to use or be called because it's a lot deeper than we think.

I think it's also important for us to remember that we're more than just a word or phrase.

tibble slimes

THE SLIME SENSATION OF SHAKER

How Maya Solganik has made a successful business and gained almost 1 million followers by making slime

Vivian Bowling *Spotlight Repoter*

Maya Solganik is redefining slime.

Slime is the ooey-gooey clay-like substance that is taking over people's homes and video screens. And more than 884,000 of those screens are tuned into Solganik's Instagram account. She uses this account to post slime videos and promote her successful business. With more 1,000 posts, Solganik has been running her slime account, @tibbleslimes, since April 27, 2017. Since then, Solganik has sold more than 10,000 units of slime.

Freshman Maya Solganik created and maintains an online slime business. She has sold more than 10,000 units of slime. **Photo by David Vahey.**

"I love how creative I can be. I have made the platform so I can control it however I want," she said. "I can sell at any time I want. It's not like I'm working in a workplace, where, to make money, I have to be there every day and work all the time. So I can self control what I'm doing, and it's all super creative and fun."

Slime is a mix of glue and sodium tetraborate, a natural chemical compound known as borax which is used to clean up supplies. Psychologists commonly recommend that patients use slime as a stress reliever, to squeeze when they get stressed or during sessions. Since 2016, slime has gained recreational popularity and become an Instagram trend. There are more than 13.3 million posts under the tag #slime.

The Oxford Dictionary defines slime as "a moist, soft and slippery substance, typically regarded as repulsive." How has something that has been used to describe worms and unlikeable people become such a sensational trend that has swept across social media?

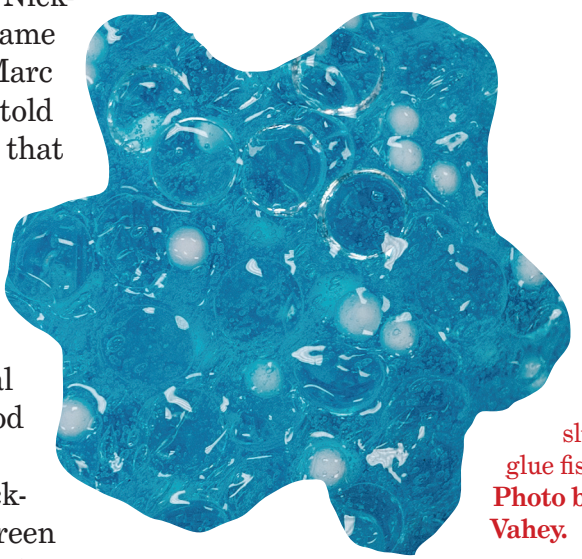
"Slime appeals to all the senses," Solganik said. "You can see it, you can touch it, you can smell it. I mean, you could eat it, but I wouldn't recommend it."

(For the record: Elmer's Glue and telaborate in diluted form can technically be eaten safely in very small quantities, but people should still not attempt to eat slime.)

Slime oozed into American households through the show "You Can't Do That on Television" which first aired on Nickelodeon in 1979. The shows featured sketches in which characters were

covered in green goo. Throughout the '90s and 2000s, contestants in Nickelodeon game shows or winners at award ceremonies would frequently be "slimed."

Former Nickelodeon game show host Marc Summers told TechInsider that the slime the shows used was made of vanilla pudding, applesauce, oatmeal and green food dye.



Solganik's Sea Foam slime, a clear glue fishbowl slime. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Unlike Nickeledeon's green goo, slime recipes today are more complex. Sodium tetraborate reacts with glue, and the mixture forms an anion, or a negatively-charged compound to which slime artists can add shaving cream, scents, lotions, fake snow, clay, beads and coloring. Solganik and other slime artists call sodium tetraborate the "activator" of slime.

Like Solganik, others have made their own accounts. The Instagram accounts @glitterslimes and @snoopslimes have been active since 2016. They are the two most-followed slime accounts, with about 2 million followers each.

Kim Ruggeri is an associate college lecturer in the Cleveland State University marketing department and faculty adviser of the CSU American Marketing Association. She said the success of Solganik and other Instagram slime entrepreneurs can be explained by "influencer marketing," which enhances connections with customers.

"A lot of businesses now know that consumers trust influencers more than they trust actual businesses. So she probably, to a lot of her followers, seems a lot more authentic and real than a company that's selling slime," Ruggeri said. She added that buyers tend to trust influencers like Solganik more, so companies invest into having influencers like her promote their items.

Solganik got into slime in seventh grade."My friend had a slime account, and I would always come over and she would have slime. She had made videos and she started selling, too. I thought it was really cool, so I started my own," she said.

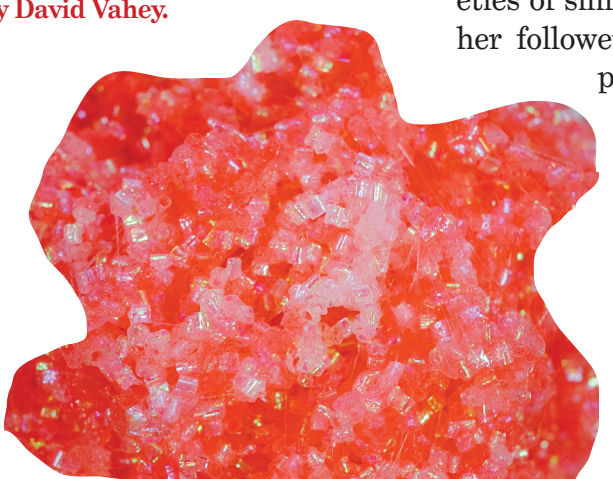
Solganik admits that her slime business is a major commitment. "I dedicate all my time. If I'm trying to restock, I just do it all the time. I do it while I'm doing my homework. 24/7, basically. It's always on my mind," she said.

"On a weekend that I'm planning to restock, it's, like, the whole day. I'll wake up at 9 and I'll work until 1a.m. But I find it very enjoyable."

Solganik usually does a restock about once every two weeks. During a restock, she makes varieties of slime, then announces to her followers what day she will post the products on her website for sale.

Solganik makes slime while doing homework after

Solganik's Shirley Tibble slime, is described on her website as "super crunchy, half-red half-white bingsu bead slime. Scented exactly like the cherry sprite drink, shirley temple." **Photo by David Vahey.**



school and on weekends. She sells around 500 to 1,000 containers of slime in anywhere from a day to a week. Solganik has friends and an employee who help her on the weekends, and her mom helps pack the orders and mails them.

Solganik's basement is dedicated to slime production. "Now, my whole basement is redone. We have slime supplies everywhere," said Solganik. She has a 20-quart mixer to make slime and hopes to get another one soon. "It could fit a small human. That's where I make my slime.

"And we have walls of ingredients. There are a lot of ingredients and containers. There's a lot of stuff," she said.

Maya's mother, Wendy Solganik, thinks her daughter has succeeded in the slime industry because of her attention to detail. She said some slime companies use inferior materials.

"Maya makes extraordinary slime. She has really high standards because she sets the tone for the whole business," she said. "If she doesn't like the way a slime comes out, she will never sell that slime. That slime will sit in our basement until we put it in the trash."

But selling slime was not Solganik's original goal when she started her Instagram account.

"She was just gonna make slime videos. It wasn't about manufacturing slime, it was just like, 'Oh, I want to have a fun Instagram account where I make slime and I make cool videos.' That's really how it got started," her mother said.

Solganik's most popular slime, is Cookie Dough Ice Cream, of which she has sold more than 1,800 units. **Photo by David Vahey.**

"She really, honestly, does not walk around telling people she has this giant Instagram account, and that she has this business, and that she's made all sorts of money. She never tells anybody. She's so modest about it, so I really appreciate that that's how she's behaving," she said.

Laney Millard, a junior, started working for Solganik three months ago. She packs slime and borax bags that are complementary with the purchase to be used as an activator. The borax is used to revive slime if it melts later or arrives sticky.

"It's actually a lot. She's so young, and it's actually a real business. There is so much work that I've been doing. It's fun, though. I really like it," Millard said.

Millard works for Solganik one day on the weekends and through the week as necessary. She said packing all the orders can be time consuming."When she has a restock, it takes four days. There are so many orders. It's crazy." she said.

Solganik maintains a supply of 500 to 1,000 slimes in up to 15 unique styles. When someone purchases Solganik's slime, she packages it into containers that hold seven or 20 ounces then ships it anywhere in the world.

He 15 styles of slime vary greatly. There is thick slime — a slime made with Elmer's Glue-

All. There is also butter slime, which is slime made with clay in it. There is clear slime, which is made with clear glue. Then there is fishbowl slime, which is clear slime with fishbowl beads. There is cloud slime and icee slime, both of which have fake snow in them. There are also various types of slimes with different types of beads; one of the most popular is "floam," or foam bead slime.

Customers can order through her website, tibbleslimes.com. She sells through Shopify, where she lists all of her slime during a restock. Solganik uses the app ShippingEasy to organize shipping. "I

Solganik mixes batches of slime in this 20-quart mixer housed in her family's basement. "You could fit a small human in it," she said. **Photo by Maya Solganik.**

then print all the shipping labels, which have their address and stuff," she said. The adhesive labels include what the customer ordered.

"After that, we put those stickers on bubble mailers. Then we stack up all the bubble mailers and we line them up against the slimes," she said. "Then we grab a bubble mailer and the slime it says on it, and we bubble wrapper and put in the borax and instructions, then we close it," she said.

Solganik handles all customer service, including complaints."If someone gets accidentally sent the wrong slime, I just send them the slime they ordered, and they can keep the one that got sent to them," she said. If there is an issue with the slime, Solganik said, it's usually because people don't really know how to play with it, adding too much borax or not following the instructions Solganik sends in the order.

"They'll buy it and be like, 'Something is so wrong,' and I'll refund them because it's worth refunding them instead of trying to show them. That just makes everyone happy," she said.

Solagnik's most popular slime is called Cookie Dough Ice Cream, which is described on her website as a "super thick and glossy slime. Scented like vanilla ice cream" that "comes with two homemade cookie dough charms." She has sold more than 1,800 units of it.

The slime community also hosts conventions that draw anywhere from 2,000-10,000 attendees, where popular slime artists will gather, sell slime and meet their followers. "Every few months I'll go to this big meet-and-greet, where I'll meet thousands of people," she said. "They all come up to me, and they hug me like I'm famous, which is crazy."

Maya's mother said Maya is happiest at slime events, which she describes as "happy people doing happy things."

Solganik believes the presence of slime has redefined her social life. "After I did slime, I met so many people that I didn't even know went to our school. I don't know if it's from slime, but it probably is. I have a big personality, and I think people also like me for my personality, but I don't think I would have met as many people" without her business, she said.

Freshman Carys Johnson, one of Solganik's friends, thinks the business is impressive.

"It's crazy how she has actually created a living off of slime," Johnson said. "She's been doing it for almost two to three years now. How's she able to manage that and school, and get good grades and stuff — it's actually so impressive."

"We are really proud of Maya," Wendy Solganik said. "It's amazing what she's done. It's amazing what she's capable of handling. It's amazing."

Ruggeri said that influencer marketing should be here to stay, as long as influencers stay transparent.

"In general consumers are trying to get more transparency and authenticity, and that definitely comes more from an influencer person that it does for a company. That being said, I think where the problem could lie is if we stop trusting influencers. If the influencers are basically being bought out by companies and promoting whatever product they're being paid to promote, then we won't trust the influencers anymore," she said.

"If we don't trust them anymore, then that could go away. But I think this could keep growing as social media keeps growing."

Ruggeri also said that because Solganik is young with a business, she could promote other young kids to realize they could start one, too.

"I think seeing someone like you doing it makes you think that it's attainable," she said. "So, absolutely, if she ever talks about how she started her business, or gives tips or something like that, I think it could get younger people to start seeing how they could do something like that, too."

Solganik said her business equips her for later success. Though, she mentions that if school work gets harder, running a business might become more difficult.

"With school and everything, it's a lot harder to keep it going. If school does not get more difficult, then I don't think it will be that much of a hassle to keep doing. Depending on the classes I take, it will be harder and harder," she said.

Solganik stretches out her Cookie Dough Ice Cream slime. **Photo by David Vahey.**

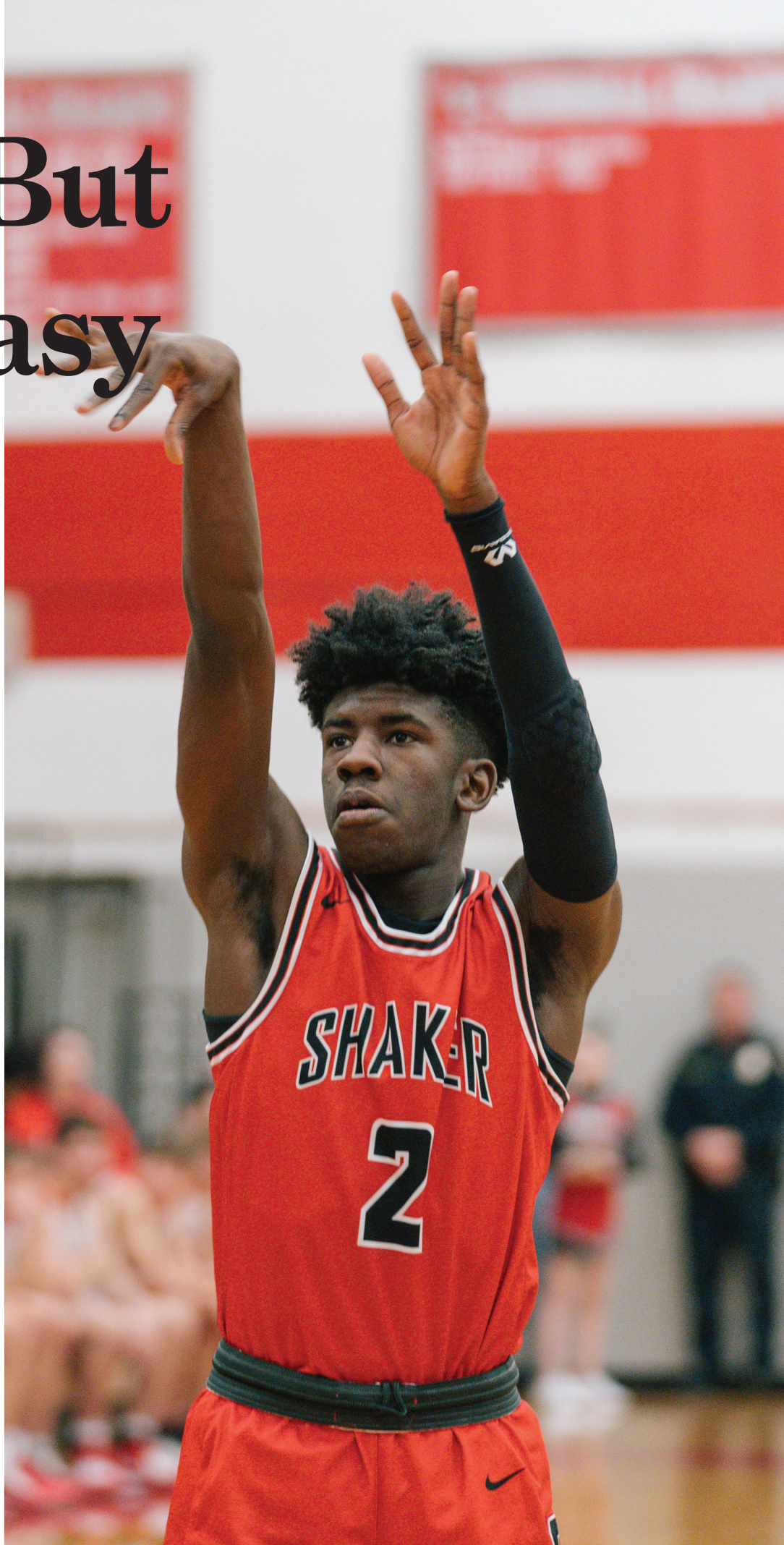
Even if Solganik does not always do slime, she hopes to always run a business.

"I don't think this will be the last of something business-y type thing that I do," she said. "I find it really interesting and whether or not I keep this going, I think I'll end up doing something like it."

Free, But Not Easy

Shaker athletes and coaches describe the preparation and pressures that go into free throw shooting

Ezra Marks *Raider Zone Editor*



Sophomore point guard Danny Young, Jr. follows through after a free throw versus Mentor Jan. 10. **Photo by David Vahey.**

Dribble three times. Pause. Spin the ball. Shoot.

Repeat.

Despite practiced routines, basketball players at all levels of competition can struggle to consistently make a shot misleadingly described as "free."

And despite an NBA that employs more knockdown three-point shooters and ever-more athletic players, one thing has remained consistent: free throw percentage. Since 2000, the NBA league average has consistently hovered around 75 percent. LeBron James carries a career average of 74 percent.

The free throw, along with basketball itself, was created in 1891 by James Naismith. Originally, the free throw line was 20 feet away from the basket. It was moved five feet closer in 1895 because players had little to no success from the original distance.

Teams also originally chose the player who took the foul shot, no matter who was fouled. In 1924, a rule change required the player who was fouled to shoot the free throws.

According to an NCAA study of every Division I men's basketball team since 2001, teams that shot more free throws won more games. "Teams could shoot dozens of 3-pointers a game, or none, with virtually no impact on their win percentage. The same goes for 2-point field goals. But free throws? That's where we saw the difference," the study's authors stated.

But in the age of social media, pressure to perform well in big moments is higher than ever, as people watch game highlights and voice their opinions instantaneously, anonymously and at a digital distance.

Junior men's basketball guard DeAndre Hall said his worst nightmare is choking: the failure of an athlete to maintain performance in big moments. "Whenever someone misses high-stake free throws, it is always over social media after the game," he said. "I know I never want to see myself in that position, and I never want to see myself on Instagram missing a big shot, so I try to re-create those moments when I'm practicing by myself."

> "Free throws are all mental. You can be the most athletic and have the best handle, but at the end of the day, games are decided by free throws."
>
> Danny Young, Jr.
> *sophomore*

Dan Cohn, who has a masters degree in sports psychology and works at Greene Clinical and Sports Psychology outside of Philadelphia, said he guides young athletes to overcome psychological pressures. "A lot of it has to do with the magnitude of the moment." Cohn said.

"Typically, I help them develop some strategies to deal with the nerves that they might be feeling in that moment; how to build their ability to focus their attention on the task at hand. I make sure the athlete feels comfortable when talking to them, while giving them the proper space they need and reminding them it's confidential. In some ways, I'm a mental coach for them," he said.

Cohn said that a basketball player's thought processes can affect their performance."If they have a high level of belief, it's more of an automatic process," said Cohn, 'but if it's something that they struggle with and they doubt themselves, sort of dealing with their own thoughts about free throw shooting might be part of the pressure."

One player accustomed to high pressure moments – especially at the free throw line -- is men's varsity point guard Danny Young, Jr. Young, a sophomore, made 13 of 14 free throws against Lutheran East Feb. 5 to help the Raiders defeat a team that played for the Division III state championship last year.

"Free throws are all mental," Young said. "You can be the most

Senior forward Eric Mudd shoots a free throw at home versus Lutheran East Feb. 5.. **Photo by David Vahey.**

athletic and have the best handle, but at the end of the day, games are decided by free throws. I train my free throw every day."

Last March, in the district quarterfinal game, the men's basketball team hosted University School in front of a sold-out crowd.

With the Raiders leading most of the way, University School managed to tie the game late in the fourth quarter. After Young, then a freshman, was fouled in the waning moments, he had to hit two free throws. He calmly drained both despite a chaotic environment and helped Shaker win, 53-49.

One way to preserve concentration in a chaotic environment is to perfect a pre-shot routine and execute it every time you shoot. Every basketball player creates a unique pre-shot ritual, but why is it important?

"If you're in a fast paced, intense game, it's important to calm your team down, especially yourself," women's varsity head coach Fred Howery said. "Having a consistent routine you're used to helps your focus and makes you comfortable, which is what you want."

Young relies on his routine.

"I always take my three dribbles and pause. I always try to stay calm and not try to rush my routine," Young said. "The situations we do in practice always help when it translates to the game, whether it be 20 seconds, 10 seconds or five seconds left. We are all used to these types of high-pressure situations in close games."

Clutch time — the term for the last few minutes of the fourth quarter — can be stressful and intimidating for players. "I remember when I was a freshman, and I was always nervous during my games," senior women's basketball forward Adaeze Okoye said. "That really had an effect on how my shots were, especially my free throws. My free throws aren't perfect, but as I've gotten older, I've felt more comfortable at the line."

Howery said he puts his players in high-pressure situations during practice to prepare them for games.

"You're not going to be able to come in from an off-season and expect to be good at shooting -- especially free throws -- if you don't

Senior guard Adaeze Okoye prepares for a free throw attempt versus Bedford Nov. 23. **Photo by David Vahey.**

work on it all year round," he said. "We always try to practice a lot from the line and do some games to put them in pressure situations so they're comfortable for when games come."

Junior guard Tahsja Jackson, who leads the women's team in scoring with 9.6 points per game, described one way her team practices free throws. "At the end of practice, we have to make seven free throws in a row in order to go home," she said. She described a time when she stayed late trying to accomplish that task. "One night, I stayed over an hour after practice was over, shooting free throws," she said.

Hall described a drill the men's team practices to improve their foul shots.

"During any type of break or after we do big runs, we do this 'Ray Allen,' and if you hit all net for your free throw, that's two points. If it rolls around the rim, that's one point, and if you miss it, it's negative one,"

Allen, the all time NBA leader in three pointers and a career 89 percent free-throw shooter, is widely regarded as one of the best shooters of all time.

The Shaker men's team named the drill after him because of his success. "We all try to get to 20, and whoever gets to 20 wins, and whoever doesn't win has to do push ups," Hall said. "That's a big reason, combined with my work ethic, on why I'm such a good shooter."

Howery said that ultimately, doing well at the freethrow line depends on practice and staying calm in the moment. "Success in high-pressure moments takes tremendous focus, concentration and a lot of practice. It's you, 15 feet from the rim, and everything you've been working on with your form,," Howery said. "It's really you zoning in on that rim and putting your hand in the cookie jar."

Young is confident in his ability to knock down the big foul shots. "At the end of the day, it comes down to practice and repetition. I know if we're down, and I get fouled, and I need to make two free throws, I always think, 'Come on! Come on!' and I'm always eager for it to go in," he said.

"But, no matter how big the environment or moment is, I usually stay calm, and I know it will go in -- because I practiced them."

DIVERSE IN NUMBERS,

The majority Black Raider cheerleaders rally on the sideline during a Jan. 8 home game against Euclid. **Photo by David Vahey.**

The majority white hockey team lines up for the national anthem before facing Holy Name Jan. 11 at Thornton Park. **Photo by David Vahey.**

BUT NOT IN ATHLETICS

Shaker sports don't reflect the school's diverse enrollment

Ben Cox *Raider Zone Editor*

Senior Sam Votruba was one of 13 white players on the high school's 75-member football team last fall.

"I think it's really important to have a diverse team," said Votruba, "but it's hard to encourage people to play 'cause they don't feel comfortable leaving their friend group and trying new things."

Votruba said joining the team created a new learning perspective.

"I wouldn't necessarily know guys on the team if I didn't play because I don't take the same classes, and so getting to know them on a new level was big," he said.

But, as the football team's numbers show, Votruba and his 12 white teammates are exceptions to a lack of diversity among the high school's athletic teams.

In 2019-20, the high school continued to show consistently low diversity rates in cheerleading, hockey, men's basketball and women's crew. These four sports have consistently been the least diverse at the high school since 2014. But why?

This year, cheerleading was the least diverse squad, comprising 27 black students and one white student, despite a high school enrollment comprising 45 percent black and 41 percent white students.

Cheerleading coach Denise Johnson, who is Black, said that few white students show interest in the sport. "What I've found as a coach now," said Johnson, "it seems that there are just not many non-black students who try out. Stylistically the dance that the cheerleaders do is more rooted in the historically black college and universities style, and that may be part of who it attracts or not."

Erica Merritt, who founded the consulting group Equius, works for the district as an interim equity partner. In that role, she is helping to draft a new equity plan. Merritt said that students tend to gravitate toward those who are the same race when they are young.

"Those are the points where they are more likely to step away from one sport and go toward the sport that most of their friends are playing," she said. Merritt also said that athletes are more likely to participate in a sport when their race is represented in the coaching staff, the fans and the players.

"Our efforts around ensuring that we have equitable and inclusive hiring processes extend to all district roles, including our coaching staff," she said.

Men's basketball head coach Danny Young, Sr., who is black, said the decline of multi-sport athletes contributes to homogenous teams. "When kids get older, they lock into one sport, trying to be the best at it, versus how elementary kids are just thinking, 'I want to do as much as I can and just have fun,' " Young said. "In the '80s and '90s the three-sport athletes were very big in Shaker. Now, over time, I think trainers -- and society in general -- are forcing kids to just pick one, causing teams to be less diverse."

The 2019-20 men's varsity basketball team was 76 percent black, 11 percent multiracial, 8 percent white and 5 percent Latino.

Junior basketball player DeAndre Hall, who is black, said that the racial imbalance on the team can be attributed to some athletes focusing on different sports. "I believe the team is majority black

> "I believe the team is majority black players because just not enough white people and minorities are trying out. People just need to have the courage to try out because you never know."
>
> DeAndre Hall
> *junior*

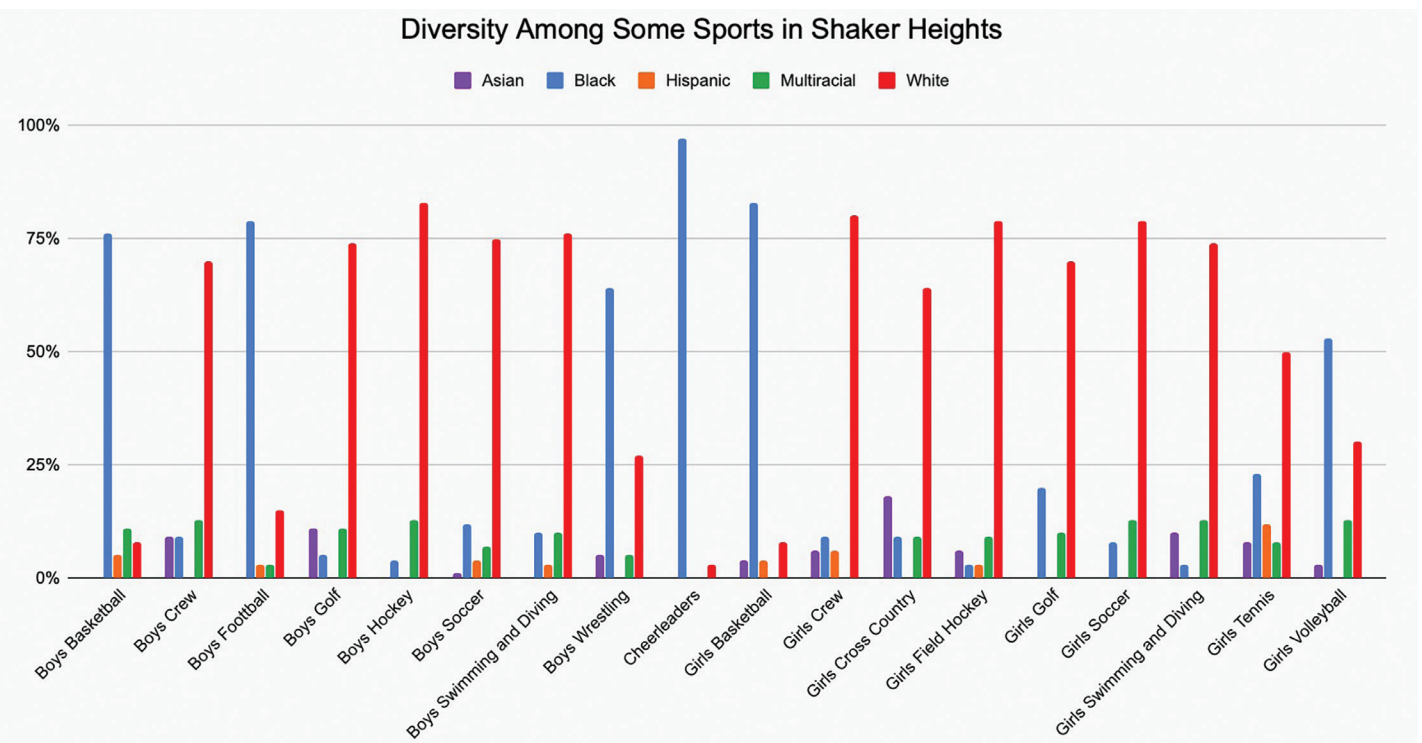
players because just not enough white people and minorities are trying out. People just need to have the courage to try out because you never know," he said.

The financial costs of playing certain sports pose another obstacle to diversity. According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, children from low-income households are half as likely to play a team sport as children from households earning at least $100,000.

Dr. Ronnie Dunn, chief diversity officer and associate professor of urban studies at Cleveland State University, said cost correlates with the lack of minorities participating in certain sports. "There is minimal cost and relatively open access to basketball and football, sports in which we find more blacks, minorities and persons from low-income backgrounds participating," he said.

By contrast, athletes who participate in crew pay a $400 fee in the fall and a $600 fee in the spring. The fees cover the costs of housing the boats and entering regattas. Crew boosters created and raised money for a scholarship fund for students who need financial assistance to participate. The 2019-20 men's crew team comprised 70 percent white, 13 percent multiracial, 9 percent black and 8 percent Asian athletes. The women's crew team was 80 percent white, 9 percent black, 6 percent Asian and 5 percent Hispanic

Hall said that friends have a big influence on each other when it comes to picking a sport. "It



Data provided by Chris Rateno, director of student data systems and accountability.

Data from spring sports was unavailable.

definitely happens. For me, my friends influenced me to start playing basketball and help me keep playing. Now it's just more fun to be with and play with your friends," he said.

Junior soccer player Jasmine Collier, who is Asian American, also said friend groups can steer participation. "I think everyone has pre-existing relationships, and they are mostly segregated by race. So coming into a new sport where you're not friends with very many people and everyone is already so close, it can be challenging, which is why most people stick with friends," she said.

A similar imbalance existed this year in the men's hockey team, which was 83 percent white, 4 percent black and 13 percent multiracial.

Hockey has historically been one of the least diverse sports, according to the NCAA. Over the past five years, 75.6 percent of NCAA players have identified as white, while 1 percent have identified as black. A 2019 National Hockey League survey found that 93 percent of league players are white. Of 713 players, only 23, or 3 percent, were black.

The Raider varsity hockey team has been 89 percent white and 4 percent black over the last five years.

Head hockey coach Matt Bartley, who is white, said there are initiatives to integrate the sport at the high school. "We are actually working now with the Cleveland Cavaliers and Cleveland Monsters to try and get more minority hockey players in the Cleveland area," he said.

One initiative is a youth program offered by the Monsters that allows kids ages 4 to 8 to enjoy an introduction to hockey and increases recognition of the sport among minority youth in Cleveland.

Dunn said that low-income youth seeking upward class mobility contributes to the lack of diversity in sports at Shaker. "They are exposed to media images of basketball and football players as celebrities that have made it," he said. One such example is this year's KIA Super Bowl commercial, which depicted NFL running back Josh Jacobs, who grew up homeless, offering advice to his younger self.

Head football coach Alex Nicholson, who is white, said that football welcomes diverse participants. "I always look at football as the sport for everyone no matter shape, size, race, color, religion -- it doesn't matter. We just want players," he said.

A study published by The Sport Journal revealed a correlation between winning percentages for men's and women's basketball teams in the Atlantic Coast Conference and the diversity of the coaching staff and team from 2005-2009. Using the Herfindahl-Hirschman index to measure diversity, a number was assigned to each team for each season. A lower number indicated a more diverse team, while a higher number indicated a less diverse team. The study showed that ACC men's teams winning percentage

The majority Black men's basketball team huddles for a timeout with Head Coach Danny Young, Jr. during a Jan. 8 home game against Euclid. **Photo by David Vahey.**

increased as HHI decreased.

Senior distance runner Vivek Divakarla, who is Indian American, said that a diverse team helps make athletes aware of lesser-known sports "It helps recognition of the sport, especially running, which is not as well represented as some other sports," he said. "Most years we see a couple of new guys who are minorities come and run because there have been minorities who came before them."

Junior sprinter Colin McCabe, who is white, said that when different groups of people associate with one another -- when they normally wouldn't have the chance -- it brings the school closer together. "I believe that having a diverse track team, or any team, is important. Last year and this winter I ran with the sprinters, a team which is made up almost entirely of black students," he said.

"And while with that team, I got the chance to meet people and make friends with people I had previously not had the opportunity to, and this is something I am glad I got the chance to do. Having people who have been exposed to diversity will allow people to have a broader understanding of the people of the United States as they grow older," he said.

FOCUS ON RACISM

Since I was young, I have been a part of many sports teams, and many coaches have said, "It is impossible to be great at too many things. Be great at one thing and pursue it." I believe this claim also holds true in regards to the Student Group on Race Relations. SGORR was founded in 1983 when students were frustrated with the lack of diversity, education and equity in Shaker. These principles are still just as important today. However, expanding SGORR's mission statement to include other social injustices in its reach spreads the organization too thin, and it reduces the effect SGORR can have on strictly race relations. Race relations can still be improved immensely in Shaker and communities across the nation. SGORR should not expand its reach to other social problems, because it reduces SGORR's impact. There are other organizations in Shaker that help specific issues such as the oppression of the LGBTQ+ community, bullying, mental health issues, which does not align with the direct goals that its founders put in place.

Zach Lehner
junior

> "SGORR is needed just as much now as it was when it was founded."

As someone who has been in Shaker since elementary school, I can say that SGORR definitely made an intense, positive impact on my life. I can confidently say that if SGORR were to teach children about too many issues, then the point of teaching race relations would get lost within their heads. I think SGORR does a great job discussing the issue of racial tolerance with the Shaker community.

The other issue with SGORR covering too many social issues is there are so many different subcategories to racism that I still haven't seen covered in a classroom setting.

With only three days in the classroom, there is only so much that SGORR can teach about. Adding other social topics into the mix makes the influence and educational possibilities much less.

Shaker has just about every club imaginable, and it has plenty that tackle other social topics like the Gender and Sexuality Alliance,Youth Ending Hunger, Political Action Club and more.

It wouldn't be practical or necessary for SGORR to take on issues outside of race because of all the organizations that tackle such issues. However it is important to acknowledge that these clubs do not have the resources that SGORR has and should also be presented with the opportunity to reach the community on the same level that SGORR does.

When the founding advisers, Marcia Jaffe and Zachary Green, started SGORR, they created an organization that promoted diverse friendships, tolerance and education on topics regarding race. These problems are still so prevalent in Shaker, and SGORR is needed just as much now as it was when it was founded. Shaker still struggles with the achievement gap, segregation in the classrooms, lunch rooms and sports teams along with ignorance about racism and where it occurs in Shaker.

Hopefully, in the future there will be a time where SGORR is no longer needed, and it can transform into an organization with different goals, However as long as racism and bigotry still exist, SGORR will need to continue its fight for racial justice and equity, as well as for a tolerant community, state, nation and world.

SGORR MUST ADAPT

Shaker Heights is a multicultural community that comprises numerous backgrounds. To ensure that each and every individual is represented, Shaker gives the community opportunities to express themselves. Starting in fifth grade all the way up until seventh grade, students are given chances to speak their minds freely in classrooms with help from a group that visits these schools and teaches them about race relations. This group is called SGORR, which stands for Student Group On Race Relations, yet from previous discussions and observations, SGORR should be SGOHR: Student Group on Human Relations.

Silver Barker
senior

Though racial relations do play a vital role in communities and this group, as we recognize our independences, freedoms and accomplishments that have been a success in this country, it is no secret that our world is changing. As we continue to change, more people are accepting things. Being a current SGORR member, I have gone into classrooms and spoken about gender as well as racial stereotypes.

The assumptions in our society, such as women being inferior to men when it comes to sports, are among the topics I have gone over in classrooms. We teach students that these assumptions are not acceptable. Another change in our society concerns the LGBTQ community. Seventeen years ago, when some of us were born, gay marriage was illegal. It is now legal, and more people have been able to open up and accept who they are and who they are attracted to. Now that it is becoming more and more usual to see a married couple of the same gender, it is important that we teach young adults not to discriminate against not only other races, but also other sexualities and identities.

Overall, we need to teach others to adapt with society. SGORR should be a group that addresses these changes and the understanding of all human relations, rather than just one.

SGORR members pose for a club photo Oct. 8, 2019. There are 296 members in the organization. **Photo by Shea Bertman.**

OPS

2019 Year in Review of "Living In Shaker Heights" Facebook Group:

1) Kathy LeBow sent out a frantic alert for her tabby, who went missing in the Fernway area. Three weeks later, the cat was found in SUSSEX! How did Mittens get all the way over there? We may never know!

2) John Waters of Lomond put the old toy train that belonged to his son (who recently graduated from OU) up for sale. The process, Waters said, was "emotional and exhausting" but after MULTIPLE background checks, he found the perfect home for the toy.

3) Sarah McDonald wrote a SCATHING review on the Shaker Square farmers market after discovering that the tie dye dress she purchased there was dyed with artificial colorings. Sarah, wherever you are, you are heard!

4) Michael Thomas ventured out to the Van Aken District for the first time and was THRILLED with what he saw! Not only did he munch on Mitchell's despite his lactose intolerance, but he went so far as to take a selfie with the big rock outside of the ice cream joint and post it to his 34 Instagram followers along with #Shakerrocks!

Alona Miller

David's Devilish Dumpings

It was recently discovered that David Glasner has taken home, for three consecutive years, the Twinsburg Twins Day Festival's Award in the Art of Dumpling Making. Rumors had been circulating about the little fella's niche for the culinary art, but it wasn't until Glasner arrived to a school board meeting with dim sum residue slathered on his nose (as one imagines he would apply sunscreen) that a full search commenced for his award-winning recipe. Rumor has it that last year he bought tickets to "Incredibles 2" just to bear witness to the short film "Bao," which preceded the feature.

What's in Mr. Juli's Satchel?

A fedora

"For after hours ;)"

Another smaller satchel

"For emergencies"

A Philly cheesesteak

"The lunch line can get long."

Dance Dance Revolution

"I'm a dancer, and a dancer dances."

A Qdoba Punchcard

"For keepsakes"

David Vahey

5-second Movie Reviews

"Little Women"

This movie has nothing to do with "Little Women: Atlanta."

"Ford V Ferrari"

A modern interpretation of "Talladega Nights."

"Parasite"

Caused a 100 percent decrease in basement parties for the 2020 season.

"Cats"

Wow. A beautiful, touching film bringing life to the tribulations of a feline.

"A Beautiful Day in The Neighborhood"

Forrest Gump, that sweater looks scratchy!

"Marriage Story"

Scarlett Johansson munches on a cookie and cries.